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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

56977

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

51 VICTORIÆ, 1888.

VOL. CCCXXIV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF MARCH, 1888,
TO
THE NINETEENTH DAY OF APRIL, 1888.

Third Volume of the Session.

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:”—

PERPETUAL PENSIONS—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,”—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*),—instead thereof .. 193

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:”—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,”—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*) .. 218

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To leave out from the word “That” to the end of the Question, in order to add the words “a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked ‘Committee,’ which shall be delivered to such Member on his application,”—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner*) .. 227

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WAYS AND MEANS—considered in Committee—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say) :—

Tea	the pound	Sixpence." 268
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After long debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

(2.) *Resolved*, That in addition to the Duties of Customs now payable on Wine, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

If in imperial pint bottles or bottles of less capacity	s. d.
2 6	
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	5 0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles a proportionate increase of Duty according to capacity.	

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 5th April.

Westminster Abbey Bill [Bill 165]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 365

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*, without Amendment:—Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

County Courts Consolidation Bill [Lords] [Bill 173]—

Moved, “That the Bill be now read a second time” 372

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th April.

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Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill—MOTION FOR LEAVE—

Moved, “That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto,”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 373

After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

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Metropolitan Board of Works Commission Bill [Bill 191]—

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After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 154]

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Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 10th April.

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After debate, *Moved*, “That the Question be now put,”—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) :—Question put :—The House *divided* ; Ayes 145, Noes 51 ; Majority 94.—(*Div. List, No. 54.*)

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CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

- (1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £29,260, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces" 483
Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,760, be granted for the said Service,"—
(Mr. Labouchere :)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided* ;
Ayes 37, Noes 77: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 55.)
Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (2.) £1,500, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 494
- (3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £77,013, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 495
Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £76,513, be granted for the said Service,"—
(Mr. Labouchere :)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided* ; Ayes 53, Noes 95; Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 56.)
Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £40,940, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament" 518
After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,940, be granted for the said Service,"—*(Mr. Cremer :)*—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.
Original Question again proposed 529
After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (5.) £2,200, Gordon Monument.
- (6.) £110,629, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.
- (7.) £12,930, to complete the sum for Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.—
After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 541
- (8.) £203,514, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 553
- (9.) £23,875, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.
- (10.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £12,756, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings" 574
After debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,756, be granted for the said Service,"—*(Mr. Labouchere :)*—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided* ; Ayes 48, Noes 57; Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 57.)
Original Question again proposed 584
Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—
(Mr. Dodds :)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.
Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (11.) £9,250, to complete the sum to defray half cost for Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 585
- (12.) £183,000, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 586
- Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the erection and maintenance (including rents, &c.) of Buildings for the Department of Science and Art" 592

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<i>Moved</i> , "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(Mr. Dilkeyn :)—Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
Resolutions to be reported <i>To-morrow</i> ; Committee report Progress ; to sit again <i>To-morrow</i> .	
Copyright (Musical Compositions) Bill [Bill 156]—	
Bill <i>considered</i> in Committee	592
After short time spent therein, Bill <i>reported</i> ; as amended, to be considered <i>To-morrow</i> .	[12.20.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 6.

MOTION.

Moveable Abodes Bill— <i>Ordered</i> (Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Hozier) ; presented, and read the first time [Bill 200]	594
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QUESTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT—SEWERAGE WORKS—INCIDENCE OF COST—Question, Mr. Mowbray ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie)	594
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON HORSES—Questions, Mr. Hozier, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Channing ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen)	595
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON CARTS AND WHEELS—Questions, Mr. Gent-Davis, Mr. Pickersgill ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen)	596
WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCES FOR AGRICULTURAL CARTS AND WAGGONS—Questions, Mr. Round, Mr. Childers, Mr. Picton ; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen)	598
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CRIMINAL LAW—7 & 8 GEO. IV. CAP. 28—REPEAL OF THE "WHIPPING PROVISIONS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews)	600
HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE—Question, Mr. Bartley ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith)	600

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read ; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—	
GOVERNMENT YARDS AND FACTORIES—RESOLUTION—	
Amendment proposed,	
To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government yards and factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"—(Mr. Baumann,)—instead thereof	601
Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	

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SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

- (1.) £7,900, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 611
- (2.) £8,940, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 632
- (3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for Edinburgh University Buildings.
- (4.) £17,626, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.
- (5.) £14,145, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 635
- (6.) £9,550, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.
- (7.) £29,180, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.
- (8.) £148,848, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.
- (9.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.
- (10.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £163,302, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883'" .. 636
- After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £162,902, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor* :)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 46, Noes 93; Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 58.)
- Original Question again proposed 641
- After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £160,302, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Nolan* :)—Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 38, Noes 99; Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 59.)
- Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (11.) £35,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 643

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

- (12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £37,731, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords" .. 644
- After short debate, *Moved*, "That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords—be reduced by the sum of £1,000,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor* :)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.
- Original Question again proposed 648
- After short debate, *Moved*, "That Item E, £6,075—Department of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Salaries—be reduced by the sum of £1,500,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor* :)—Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 33, Noes 78; Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 60.)
- Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
- (13.) £43,387, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.—After short debate, Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present, Vote *agreed to* 656
- (14.) £50,222, to complete the sum for the Treasury.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 659
- (15.) £80,734, to complete the sum for the Home Office.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 661
- Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £61,073, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and

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Third Resolution read a first and second time :— <i>Moved</i> , "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution :"—After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
Remaining Resolutions <i>agreed to</i> .	
Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill [Lords] [Bill 196]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i>)	697
After short debate, [House counted out] [11.25.]	

COMMONS, MONDAY, APRIL 9.

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Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland [Salary, &c.]—REPORT—

Resolutions reported 725

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the First Resolution,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour* :)—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy* :)—After short debate, Question put :—The House divided; Ayes 104, Noes 169; Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

Original Question again proposed 729

After short debate, Original Question put :—The House divided; Ayes 184, Noes 109; Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 62.)

Second Resolution agreed to :—Bill ordered (*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Jackson*); presented, and read the first time. [Bill 201.]

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<i>Moved</i> , (1.) "That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):	
Tea the pound Sixpence."	720
After long debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Other Resolutions <i>agreed to</i> .	
(8.) <i>Resolved</i> , That it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Inland Revenue and the Customs.	
Resolutions to be reported <i>To-morrow</i> ; Committee to sit again upon <i>Wednesday</i> .	
Bill (Scotland) Bill [Bill 172].—	
Order for Committee read	841
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Resolution 4 :—After short debate, Resolution <i>postponed</i> .	
Resolution 5 :—After short debate, Resolution <i>agreed to</i> .	
Resolutions 6 to 13 <i>agreed to</i> .	
Resolution 14 <i>postponed</i> .	
Resolution 15 <i>agreed to</i> .	
Postponed Resolutions to be considered upon <i>Thursday</i> .	
MOTION.	
—o—	
ADJOURNMENT—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That this House do now adjourn,"—(<i>Mr. Jackson</i>)	845
After short debate, Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> .	
—o—	
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<i>Ordered</i> , That the Committee of the Chairman's Panel have leave to make a Report	845
<i>Ordered</i> , That the Report do lie upon the Table. [12.25.]	
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[5.55.]

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M O T I O N .

—o—

ORDERS OF THE DAY (SUPPLY)—RESOLUTION—

- Moved*, "That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Fridays, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1199
- After debate, Question put :—The House *divided*; Ayes 243, Noes 143; Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

O R D E R S O F T H E D A Y .

—o—

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]— SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—

- Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April],
"That the Bill be now read a second time :"—Question again pro-
posed :—Debate *resumed* 1210
- After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *further adjourned* till Monday next.

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill [Bill 129]—

- Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis*) .. 1286
- After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned till Friday next :—Debate to be resumed upon Friday next.

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 154]

- Bill *considered* in Committee 1288
- After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon Friday next.

M O T I O N S .

—o—

Weekly Wages Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Fenwick*, *Mr. William Abraham* (Glamorgan), *Mr.*

- Burt*, *Mr. Howell*, *Mr. Cremer*, *Mr. Randell*, *Mr. De Cobain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 208] 1290

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses (No. 2) Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*,

- Mr. Osborne Morgan*, *Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson*, *Mr. A. Gathorne-Hardy*, *Mr. M'Logan*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 209] 1290

Livery Franchise (London) Abolition Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Firth*, *Mr. Causton*, *Mr.*

- James Stuart*, *Mr. Montagu*, *Mr. Octavius V. Morgan*, *Mr. Pickersgill*, *Mr. Rowlands*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 210] 1290

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—SPECIAL REPORT—

- Ordered*, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 1290
- Ordered*, That the Report do lie upon the Table. [12.10.]

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Copyhold Acts Amendment Bill (No. 6)—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^a ,”—(<i>The Lord Hobhouse</i>) ..	1293
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East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^a ,”—(<i>The Viscount Cross</i>) ..	1295
Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read 2 ^a accordingly, and <i>committed</i> to a Committee of the Whole House <i>To-morrow</i> .	
SAVING OF LIFE AT SEA (USE OF OIL FOR CALMING ROUGH SEAS)—	
MOTION FOR RETURNS—	
<i>Moved</i> for,	
1. “Copy of any report or memorandum of the Board of Trade calling attention to a memorandum issued by the Board of Admiralty on the use of oil at sea for modifying the effects of breaking waves.	
2. Copy of Circular Letter of the Admiralty, of 1st December, 1884, No. 3,206-8,305.	
3. Copy of a Report of Captain Chetwynd, R.N., to the Committee of the Royal and National Lifeboat Institution, 30th September, 1884, referred to in those reports,”—(<i>The Lord Cottesloe</i>) ..	1296
Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Returns ordered to be laid before the House. [5.0.]	

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

- o—
- Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—**
SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [THIRD NIGHT]—
 Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April],
 "That the Bill be now read a second time: "—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1331
 After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Caine*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.
- Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill [Bill 118]—**
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 1442
 After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.
- Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill—**
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1443
 After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—
 Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

- o—
- EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (CLARK'S BEQUEST, &c.)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—**
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the scheme for the Management of the Endowments in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity and county of Inverness, known as Clark's Bequest, and the Nairnside School, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act) now lying upon the Table of the House,"—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*) .. 1415
 After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 35, Noes 93; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 70.)
- County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 173]—**
Ordered, That the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] upon **Monday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock,**—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan*.) [12.45.]

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NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (1882)—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—

THE DISTURBANCE AT ENNIS—

<i>Moved</i> , “That this House do now adjourn,”—(<i>Mr. Parnell</i>) ..	1068
After debate, Question put :—The House <i>divided</i> ; Ayes 179, Noes 249; Majority 70.	
Division List, Ayes and Noes	1106

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]—

<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read a second time,”—(<i>Mr. Ritchie</i>) ..	1109
After long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned :— Debate to be resumed <i>To-morrow</i> .	

SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolutions [9th April] <i>reported</i> ..	1170
Resolutions 4 and 14 <i>further considered</i> :—After short debate, Resolutions <i>agreed to</i> .	

MOTIONS.

Marriages of Nonconformists (Attendance of Registrars) (No. 2) Bill—

<i>Ordered</i> (<i>Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Richard, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Waddy</i>); <i>pre-</i> <i>sented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 205]	1174
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Partnership Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot,* *Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Seale-Hayne*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 206]

1174

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Amendment) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. W. Russell,* *Mr. Leo, Mr. Sinclair*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 207] ..

1174
[12.25.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, APRIL 13.

Women's Suffrage Bill (No. 52)—

<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^d ,”—(<i>The Lord Denman</i>) ..	1175
Amendment <i>moved</i> , to leave out (“now,”) and add at the end of the Motion (“this day six months,”)—(<i>The Lord President</i> .)	
On Question, That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion? <i>Resolved</i> in the <i>negative</i> :—Bill to be read 2 ^d <i>this day six</i> <i>months</i> .	

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Coleraine, &c.) Bill [N.L.]—

<i>Presented</i> (<i>The Lord President, for The Lord Privy Seal</i>); read 1 st , and <i>referred</i> to the Examiners (No. 63)	1178
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[5.0.]

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—o—

ORDERS OF THE DAY (SUPPLY)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That Standing Order No. 11, appointing the Committee of Supply to be the first Order of the Day on Fridays, be read and suspended, and that the Orders of the Day for the Second Reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Electors Bill have precedence of the Committee of Supply,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) 1199
 After debate, Question put :—The House *divided*; Ayes 243, Noes 143 ; Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

O R D E R S O F T H E D A Y .

—o—

Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]— SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April],
 "That the Bill be now read a second time :"—Question again pro-
 posed :—Debate *resumed* 1210
 After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Courtney* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *further adjourned* till Monday next.

Mountains, Rivers, and Pathways (Wales) Bill [Bill 129]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis*) .. 1286
 After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned till Friday next :—Debate to be resumed upon Friday next.

Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 154]

Bill *considered* in Committee 1288
 After short time spent therein, Bill *reported* ; as amended, to be considered upon Friday next.

M O T I O N S .

—o—

Weekly Wages Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, Mr. De Cobain*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 208] 1290

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. A. Gathorne-Hardy, Mr. M'Lagan*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 209] 1290

Livery Franchise (London) Abolition Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Firth, Mr. Causton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Rowlands*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 210] 1290

—o—

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—SPECIAL REPORT—

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report 1290
Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table. [12.10.]

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Copyhold Acts Amendment Bill (No. 6)—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^a ,”—(<i>The Lord Hobhouse</i>) ..	1293
After short debate, Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read 2 ^a accordingly, and <i>committed</i> to a Committee of the Whole House on <i>Monday</i> next.	
East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways) Bill—	
<i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read 2 ^a ,”—(<i>The Viscount Cross</i>) ..	1295
Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read 2 ^a accordingly, and <i>committed</i> to a Committee of the Whole House <i>To-morrow</i> .	
SAVING OF LIFE AT SEA (USE OF OIL FOR CALMING ROUGH SEAS)—	
MOTION FOR RETURNS—	
<i>Moved</i> for,	
1. “Copy of any report or memorandum of the Board of Trade calling attention to a memorandum issued by the Board of Admiralty on the use of oil at sea for modifying the effects of breaking waves.	
2. Copy of Circular Letter of the Admiralty, of 1st December, 1884, No. 3,206-8,305.	
3. Copy of a Report of Captain Chetwynd, R.N., to the Committee of the Royal and National Lifeboat Institution, 30th September, 1884, referred to in those reports,”—(<i>The Lord Cottesloe</i>)	1296
Motion <i>agreed to</i> :—Returns ordered to be laid before the House. [5.0.]	

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

- Local Government (England and Wales) Bill** [Bill 182]—
SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [THIRD NIGHT]—
 Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April],
 "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again pro-
 posed:—Debate *resumed* 1331
 After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Caine*):—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till
To-morrow, at Two of the clock.
- Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill** [Bill 118]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 1442
 After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time,
 and *committed* to a Select Committee.
- Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Amendment Bill—**
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) 1443
 After short debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:—
 Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

MOTIONS.

—o—

- EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1882 (CLARK'S BEQUEST, &c.)—**MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to withhold Her consent from the scheme for the Management of the Endowments in the united parishes of Daviot and Dunlichity and county of Inverness, known as Clark's Bequest, and the Nairnside School, approved by the Scotch Education Department (by Act) now lying upon the Table of the House,"—(*Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh*) .. 1415
 After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 35, Noes 93; Majority 58.—(Div. List, No. 70.)
- County Courts Consolidation Bill** [*Lords*] [Bill 173]—
Ordered, That the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, do sit and proceed with the County Courts Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] upon Monday, 23rd April, at half-past Eleven of the clock,—(*Mr. Osborne Morgan*). [12.45.]

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NEW PEER—

William Henry Lord De Ramsey—Was (in the usual manner) introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) Bill (No. 38)

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d,"—(*The Earl of Crawford*) .. 1453

After short debate, Motion agreed to:—Bill read 2^d accordingly. [5.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

Metropolitan Board of Works (*Theatres, &c.*) Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Tatton Egerton*) 1463

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Dixon-Hartland*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question: "
—After short debate, Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 13,
Noes 144; Majority 126.—(Div. List, No. 71.)

Words added:—Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to:—Second Reading put off for six months.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

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INSUFFICIENT AND DEFECTIVE ACCOMMODATION—Question, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) 1472

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 "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate resumed .. 1499
 After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Firth*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate further adjourned till Thursday.
 The House suspended its Sitting at Seven of the clock.
-
- The House resumed its Sitting at Nine of the clock.
- Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) Bill [Bill 92]—**
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question put:—The House divided; Ayes 37, Noes 44; Majority 7.—(Div. List, No. 72.)
- Architects' Registration Bill [Bill 81]—**
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Colonel Duncan*) 1552
 After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Bill *withdrawn*.

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Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question :"—After further debate. Question put :—The House <i>divided</i> ; Ayes 96, Noes 147 ; Majority 51.—(<i>Div. List</i> , No. 73.)	
Words <i>added</i> :—Main Question, as amended, put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Second Reading <i>put off</i> for six months.	
 Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) Bill [Bill 162]—	
<i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh</i>)	1590
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(<i>Mr. Mark Stewart</i> .)	
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question :"—After debate, Question put :—The House <i>divided</i> ; Ayes 90, Noes 126 ; Majority 36.—(<i>Div. List</i> , No. 74.)	
Words <i>added</i> :—Main Question, as amended, put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill <i>put off</i> for six months.	

MOTIONS.

—o—

Queen Anne's Bounty Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Henniker Heaton*, *Mr. Hanbury*, *Mr. Kerans*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 211] 1603

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—

Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as proposes the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Private Bill Legislation be now *considered* :—

Lords Message considered *accordingly*.

Ordered, That the Select Committee appointed to join with the Committee of the Lords to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified, with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of Costs and Charges, do meet in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath directed the said Committee to meet in Room 1, Upper Corridor, upon Friday next, at half-past Three of the clock.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to agree in the appointment of a Chairman :—That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records :—That three be the quorum.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

Partnership Bill [Bill 206]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time" 1609
It being One of the clock A.M., the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow* ; and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

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Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill [Bill 2]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Henegge*) .. 1605

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Salt*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question :"
—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 239, Noes 182; Majority 57.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1665

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for Friday 27th April.

WAYS AND MEANS—considered in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.	
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3	
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6	
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0	
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0	
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0	
—(<i>Mr. Jackson</i>)				1668

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Craig* :)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]—

Order for Second Reading read 1673

Second Reading *deferred* till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley*, *Mr. Secretary Mattheus*); presented, and read the first time [Bill 212] .. 1674

Local Government Provisional Orders Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Long*, *Mr. Ritchie*); presented, and read the first time [Bill 213] .. 1674

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Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill—Ordered (*Mr. Long*, *Mr. Ritchie*); presented, and read the first time [Bill 216] .. 1675

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LORDS, THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

Liability of Trustees Bill (No. 24)—

Select Committee nominated :—List of the Committee 1676

HOUSE OF LORDS—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to appoint a Commission to inquire and report upon the question whether a revision of the Standing Orders in the House of Lords, or other changes with regard to it, might be so framed as to add to its efficiency,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 1676

After short debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the *negative*.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION—

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have directed the Select Committee appointed by them to join with a Committee of this House to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation to meet the Committee appointed by their Lordships in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock:

Ordered, That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Committee appointed by the Commons in Room No. 1, Upper Corridor, To-morrow at half-past Three of the clock.

[5.15.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, APRIL 19.

P R I V A T E B U S I N E S S .

—o—

Keble College Bill [Lords] (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. J. G. Talbot*) 1687

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge should be extended to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,"—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny*),—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 125, Noes 127; Majority 2.—(Div. List, No. 76.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added" 1701

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment in line 3, after the word "extended," to insert the words "by a Private Bill,"—(*Mr. Courtney Kenny*):—Question, "That those words be inserted in the proposed Amendment," put, and *agreed to*.

Question,

"That the words 'it is inexpedient that the privilege of exemption from the Mortmain Act, enjoyed by the Colleges in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, should be extended by a Private Bill to any College which, though situate at Oxford, is not incorporated with the University, and which is restricted to the members of a particular Church,' be added after the word 'That' in the Main Question,"

put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

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After short debate, Question put, and <i>negatived</i> .	

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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again pro- posed:—Debate resumed ..	1746
After long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:— Debate to be resumed <i>To-morrow</i> .	
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill [Bill 207]— <i>Moved</i> , "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(<i>Mr. T. W. Russell</i>)	
Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill read a second time, and <i>committed</i> for <i>Thursday</i> next.	1823
Fishery Acts Amendment (Ireland) Bill [Bill 32]— Order for Committee read:— <i>Moved</i> , "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(<i>Colonel Nolan</i>) ..	
Question put, and <i>agreed to</i> :—Bill <i>considered</i> in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again <i>To-morrow</i> .	1824
Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]— Order for Second Reading read ..	
Second Reading <i>deferred</i> till <i>Monday</i> next.	1825

MOTIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (NEW CODE, 1888)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS— <i>Moved</i> , "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to with- hold Her assent from so much of the Code (1888) of the Scotch Education Depart- ment as imposes on the earning of grants for cookery a new restriction not imposed in the English Code :	
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After short debate, Motion, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .	
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill— <i>Ordered</i> (<i>Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson</i>) ; <i>presented</i> , and read the first time [Bill 221] 1832

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say) :

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow* ; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

[12.40.]

L O R D S .

—o—

NEW PEER.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

William Henry Lord de Ramsey—introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July, 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

C O M M O N S .

—o—

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

For *Limerick Borough*, v. Henry Joseph Gill, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

MONDAY, APRIL 16.

For *Lanark (Mid Division)*, v. Stephen Mason, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22.

County of Leicester (Eastern or Melton Division)—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

County of Glamorgan (Western or Gower Division)—David Randell, esquire.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE
THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—
Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt
(Conversion) * (49).
Second Reading — Merchant Shipping (Life-
Saving Appliances) (43).
Third Reading—Law of Distress Amendment
(44), and *passed*.

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT

BILL.—(No. 44.)

(*The Lord Herschell*.)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^d."
—(*The Lord Herschell*.)

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, the intention of the Bill was to put the landlord in the same position as other creditors. But the effect of this would be to take away from the tenant

the credit on which, at present, he could rely. The result would be that the tenant would either have to pay in advance or would have his rent raised. He did not intend to oppose the Bill; but he wished to call attention to the direction in which legislation was now going.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that he would not have introduced the Bill unless he had received assurances of its usefulness from those who were better able to judge of the matter than himself, and those who had a practical acquaintance with the question had assured him that it was likely to be advantageous, since the present system combined the maximum of hardship to the tenant with the minimum of advantage to the landlord, because when the tools of a skilled workman were sold they generally fetched very little, while the workman was deprived of his means of working.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 3^d accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

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B

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE-SAVING
APPLIANCES) BILL.—(No. 43.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (*The Earl of Onslow*), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, observed that the subject of the better preservation of life at sea was one which had already engaged the attention of Parliament, and a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the whole subject. That Commission had dealt with the subject in a far more comprehensive manner than he now proposed to do in the present Bill. A Bill had also been introduced last year in "another place" which had been referred to a Select Committee. That Bill had dealt exclusively with the provision of boats and life-saving apparatus, and it was upon the Report of that Committee that the provisions of the present Bill were mainly founded. The subject had also aroused the attention of some of our Colonies, and representations had been made by the Governments of Tasmania, Queensland, and Victoria, to the effect that legislation should be initiated by the Imperial Parliament, in consequence of which the question had been discussed at the Colonial Conference. At the present time ships were divided into two classes; the first being "passenger ships"—namely, those only which carried emigrants, and other ships, which meant all ships, whether they carried passengers or cargo, provided they did not carry emigrants. The Passengers Act, 1855, provided that every passenger ship should carry a number of boats in proportion to her tonnage. A ship of under 200 tons was to carry two boats, under 400 three boats, under 600 four boats, under 1,000 five boats, and under 1,500 tons six boats; while a ship of over 1,500 tons, whatever might be her size, was only obliged to carry seven boats, no matter what amount of passengers she carried. It was also necessary to carry four lifebuoys only. Whether a ship carried passengers or not, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, she was obliged to carry the necessary complement of boats according to the scale

if she cleared from any port in the United Kingdom; if she did not, there was no compulsion to carry any life-saving apparatus whatever. Owing to the fact that that Act made demands far in excess of the actual requirements of the case, it had become practically a dead letter. By law a vessel could not be obliged to carry more than seven lifeboats. In 1873 power had been given to the Board of Trade to relieve shipowners who did not carry more than 12 passengers by diminishing the number of boats they were obliged to carry. It was not a general complaint that the large well-found steamers were insufficiently supplied with life-saving apparatus. If they took the *Cunard* steamers—for instance, the *Etruria*—the captain of that ship gave evidence that she carried, on the average, 1,000 persons; that she had 14 large boats capable of carrying 800, with 1,207 life-belts, one in each state room for every passenger, carried overhead in racks. Besides this there were bulkhead doors which were closed every day all through the ship by the chief engineer in his department and by the chief officer in the sailing department. All boats were lowered every Friday in Liverpool before they sailed; the boats were sent away from the ship manned; if there was any wind they sailed; if not, they were pulled; the boats were all ready for sea use, and all the 12 or 14 boats could be lowered into the water in the space of two minutes, and they were also provisioned with water. In the *City of New York*, lately launched, additional life-saving apparatus was provided in the shape of a false bottom, so that if one bottom was stove in the ship would still have the false one to keep the water out. Similar precautions in regard to boats were taken on board the steamers running between Calais and Dover, and Folkestone and Boulogne. But in short voyage ships, taking the average of 50 ships leaving the Port of Liverpool, the legal requirement of boat accommodation was found to be 7·6 per cent of the passengers carried; but the actual percentage was 10·6, and in those boats which crossed the Irish Channel the legal requirement was 13·1 and the actual percentage 16·1. There were life jackets for the crew only. But life-saving apparatus for only 10 or 16 per cent was very inadequate. These requirements

were based upon the tonnage of a ship and not on the number of passengers, and the tonnage of ships was very different from what it used to be owing to the deductions now made from the gross tonnage. He knew of a case where the tonnage from 300 gross had by various reductions been reduced to 6 net, and therefore the life-saving apparatus which the ship would be required to carry would be almost *nil*. It was also necessary to see that the apparatus was in a state of efficiency. Great complaints had been made on the part of seamen going to sea in cargo ships, not of the amount of boat accommodation provided, but on account of the state of that accommodation. There had been a case not long ago of a man falling overboard and being afloat for 25 minutes; they had been three-quarters of an hour before they got a boat over the side for the want of proper davits. The evidence was to the effect that the boat was on the after-house, turned upside down. They had to turn the boat over; and, finally, a sea had lifted her off the tackles and she had broken in two. At present the Surveyors of the Board of Trade were not empowered to go on board to inspect the life-saving apparatus; they could only inspect crew spaces, lights, and fog signals, unless they were Inspectors also, which they rarely were. Since 1875 the Board of Trade had only obtained four convictions against owners for want of proper boat accommodation and want of efficient life-saving appliances. It might be said that the most efficient mode of saving life at sea was to keep the vessel afloat by means of bulkheads; but, in dealing with these matters, we must not attempt to overweight the Bill, competition with foreign shipping was so keen. The value of boats for saving life was very great, notwithstanding the present inadequate provision. In the period of nine years between 1876 and 1885, of 135,273 lives which had been exposed to loss by wreck, 60,231 were actually saved by the ships' own boats, that was nearly two-thirds of the 109,745 saved, and nearly half of the whole lives that needed saving. We had lost on or near the coast 6,629 lives in the same period. We had fortunately saved 34,602 lives in the nine years, but by far the greatest proportion—namely, 14,807, had been saved by the ships'

own boats. The Bill would provide for a new departure in this legislation. The Government thought that those who were primarily interested had already endeavoured in some measure to do their duty. On the lines crossing the Atlantic and the Channel adequate provision far exceeding what was required by law had been made, and he thought we should be meeting the requirements of all concerned if we invited the owners and others interested to advise as to how this life-saving apparatus might be provided. First of all, there were the shipowners, then there were the shipbuilders, then the practical navigators, then the able seamen, and, lastly, the underwriters at Lloyd's. The Bill proposed that a Committee, composed of three of each of these classes, should be formed *ad hoc* for the purpose of classifying the different kinds of vessels, and then of making rules with regard to the life-saving apparatus to be carried by each. These rules would be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade, and would be laid upon the Table of that and the other House of Parliament, so that Parliament would have an opportunity of judging whether they would be efficient or not. As to inspection, any Surveyor or other person appointed by the Board of Trade might give notice to an owner that a ship should not clear if there was any deficiency. He did not claim that the result of this measure would be absolute immunity as regarded loss of life at sea; but he trusted that it would reduce the risks, and provide some remedy for a state of the law which was at present extremely anomalous and not suited to the requirements of the times. The boat scales in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, and Passengers Act, 1855, were framed upwards of 30 years ago to meet a different state of things than now existed. At that time nearly the whole of the passenger traffic was carried on by wooden sailing ships of about 1,200 to 1,500 tons burden. The boat scales were framed on the basis of the ship's registered tonnage, which, in those days of sailing ships, gave a very good idea of the vessel's size and of her capabilities for stowing boats, &c.; but now the sailing ships had entirely given place to iron or steel steamships of two or three times their size. Every merchant seaman on the North-East Coast was in favour of men

being provided with life-belts. He ventured to hope that the rules to be made by this Committee would be welcomed and cheerfully observed by all the interests concerned, and that, if these expectations were fulfilled, it might be possible to extend still further the principle of inviting all the interests affected by other such matters to unite in deciding what restrictions should be laid upon them for their common good. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."
—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

LORD COTTESLOE said, he heartily supported the principle of the Bill, which he earnestly hoped might conduce to the saving of life at sea. He would also suggest that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, something should be done to require the use of oil in cases of storm and shipwreck.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, that the object of the Bill was one which every man would approve, and he entirely agreed with the noble Lord who had moved the second reading that the present law was most unsatisfactory. It was more—it was extremely anomalous, and in some of its provisions almost absurd. But he wished to say that there was no class of men in this country who were more anxious to save life than the shipowners, and he was not in the least ashamed to tell their Lordships that the conviction had been forced upon his mind that, of all the traders of this country, the most capable of conducting their business were the shipowners. He regarded, therefore, with some degree of suspicion, or at least of jealousy, all those attempts to teach men a business which they knew much better than the Legislature. By Clause 2 the President of the Board of Trade, for the time being, was authorized to appoint a Consultative Committee to assist him in this particular matter. There were to be three representatives of each class concerned on that council, the selection of whom was to be left absolutely in the hands of the President of the Board of Trade. Now this council ought to consist of the most competent men in the country; but the most competent men had so much to do at home that they would be prevented from coming up to London, and waiting on the President of the Board of Trade

to teach him his business. He was much afraid that the persons who would be left to select from would be gentlemen who had nothing else to do, and who would be very glad of a run to London, at the public expense, if they had the opportunity. He thought that question would require considerable threshing out on the next stage of the Bill. He would further point out that what the Bill required to be done was practically done now by all the best shipowners in the country. Interference with a great industry should be confined to a minimum, and only to such matters as were absolutely necessary to protect life. The next point he wished to refer to was Clause 5, which provided for the inspection of ships for the purpose of enforcing the rules made by the Bill. That inspection was to be undertaken by a Surveyor appointed under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, or any such other person as the President of the Board of Trade might appoint. Those words seemed to him very much too wide, and ought to be altered by adding some such words as "properly qualified." He had ventured to make these few remarks preparatory to the next stage of the Bill, because he thought it was only fair to point out defects in the Bill on the second reading, so that the Government might have an opportunity of considering them before the Committee stage was reached.

LORD SUDELEY said, he entirely agreed with the noble Earl who had introduced the Bill that the present state of the law was most anomalous. It was most important not to take the responsibility away from the shipowners, and that where ships were not well found there should be some regulations which would show what was desirable for saving life at sea. He agreed with the noble Earl who spoke last that the Consultative Committee should be composed of thoroughly practical men, but he could not but believe that the President of the Board of Trade would do his best to attain that object. It was shown in a discussion that place in that House some years ago that throwing oil on the water immediately around a ship had a very beneficial effect. He thought that if to every lifebuoy a bag of oil was attached much good might be done. When the buoy was thrown into the water the oil would trickle out, and

The Earl of Onslow

there could be no doubt that that would smooth the water for some distance round the buoy. He thought that was a point worth consideration by the Board of Trade. He was extremely glad the Government had taken up this matter, and he sincerely hoped the Bill would be passed almost in its present shape.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, that as he had something to do with the earlier stages of the Bill he should like to say a word in support of it. He thought his noble Friend who had introduced the Bill with such a clear and able statement must be satisfied with the reception it had met with at the hands of their Lordships. No doubt, the Bill dealt with two very important questions. In the first place, it revised the boat scale; and, in the next place, it contained a provision by which the Board of Trade would be brought in future more directly in touch with some of the commercial interests. It had been said that the Board of Trade had been indifferent to the interests with which it had to deal; but he did not think that was a just accusation. No one who had not been at the Board of Trade could understand the difficulties which surrounded the Office of President, and the vast number of subjects with which he was called upon to deal. The subjects brought under the President's consideration ranged from lighthouses to bankruptcy, and from sea vessels to salmon fishing. It was, therefore, impossible that any man who undertook that Office could have a full knowledge of everything with which he had to deal. The noble Earl (the Earl of Ravensworth) appeared to think that the most competent men of their respective class would not be secured to act on the Consultative Committee. He could not agree with the noble Earl in this view. During his short experience of the Board of Trade he had found gentlemen, at great sacrifice of their valuable time, and often at much inconvenience to their own business, ready on all occasions to come forward freely and frankly to give the Department the benefit of their advice, and he desired to take this opportunity of acknowledging the debt of gratitude under which he lay to those gentlemen. He could well understand the feeling of shipowners towards the Board of Trade, for they certainly had

sometimes had a rough time of it. With regard to the method of constituting this Consultative Committee, he thought the mode proposed in the Bill—namely, that of the selection of three names out of nine names submitted by each of the respective bodies—was the best that could be devised. The Bill followed as closely as possible the recommendations of the Committee which sat last year to inquire into the subject, with Lord Charles Beresford as Chairman. The proposal in the Bill for constituting the Consultative Committee was the most practical form of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee. The noble Earl seemed to make it a point of objection to this Bill that it merely provided for that which all good shipowners already made it a practice to do; but this was an argument in favour of the Bill—namely, that it would merely compel careless shipowners to take the precautions which good shipowners took already. Another excellent point of the Bill was that it aimed at securing its object by prevention rather than by penalty. In proceedings against a shipowner the jury were only too ready to give him the benefit of the doubt, and proceedings after a casualty had occurred were consequently found not to be effective. He hoped that this experiment of appointing a Consultative Committee to assist the Board of Trade would be followed in regard to other matters, but to appoint a general Consultative Council to assist the Board of Trade in regard to all its operations would be quite illusory, for men of great experience on some matters might be asked to express an opinion on others of which they had no especial knowledge. The appointment of Consultative Committees *ad hoc* for the purpose of dealing with the details of particular measures might, however, be very desirable and of great practical utility. Nothing would do more to break down that feeling of antagonism which in certain quarters unfortunately and unjustly existed against the Board of Trade. He was sure his noble Friend in charge of the Bill would give a full and fair consideration to any Amendment which might be brought forward with regard to the details of the Bill, and he believed that the Bill, when passed into law, would prove a most useful measure.

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Local Government (England and Wales) Bill [Bill 182]— SECOND READING [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [FIFTH NIGHT]— Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], “That the Bill be now read a second time:”—Question again pro- posed:—Debate resumed		1746
After long debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned:— Debate to be resumed <i>To-morrow</i> .		
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill [Bill 207]— <i>Moved</i> , “That the Bill be now read a second time,”—(<i>Mr. T. W. Russell</i>)		1823
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Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill [Bill 61]— Order for Second Reading read		1825
Second Reading <i>deferred</i> till <i>Monday</i> next.		

MOTIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (NEW CODE, 1888)—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS— <i>Moved</i> , “That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to with- hold Her assent from so much of the Code (1888) of the Scotch Education Depart- ment as imposes on the earning of grants for cookery a new restriction not imposed in the English Code :	
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After short debate, Motion, by leave, <i>withdrawn</i> .		
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders Bill —Ordered (<i>Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson</i>) ; presented, and read the first time [Bill 221] 1832

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That in addition to the Duties of Customs payable on Wine before the twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be levied and charged the Duties following (that is to say) :

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—

	£	s.	d.
If in imperial half-pint bottles or bottles of less capacity ..	0	1	3
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial half-pint bottles and not exceeding imperial pint bottles	0	2	6
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial pint bottles and not exceeding imperial quart bottles	0	5	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding imperial quart bottles and not exceeding two imperial quarts	0	10	0
If in bottles of capacity exceeding two imperial quarts	1	0	0

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow* ; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

[12.40.]

L O R D S .

— o —

NEW PEER.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17.

William Henry Lord de Ramsey—introduced by virtue of a patent dated the 8th day of July, 1887, his father, the first Baron, who was created by such patent, never having taken his seat.

C O M M O N S .

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NEW WRITS ISSUED.

TUESDAY, APRIL 10.

For *Limerick Borough*, v. Henry Joseph Gill, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

MONDAY, APRIL 16.

For *Lanark (Mid Division)*, v. Stephen Mason, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22.

County of Leicester (Eastern or Melton Division)—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5.

County of Glamorgan (Western or Gower Division)—David Randell, esquire.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE
THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1888.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading—*
Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*; National Debt
(Conversion)* (49).
Second Reading— Merchant Shipping (Life-
Saving Appliances) (43).
Third Reading— Law of Distress Amendment
(44), and *passed*.

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT

BILL.—(No. 44.)

(*The Lord Herschell.*)

THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^d."
—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, the intention of the Bill was to put the landlord in the same position as other creditors. But the effect of this would be to take away from the tenant

the credit on which, at present, he could rely. The result would be that the tenant would either have to pay in advance or would have his rent raised. He did not intend to oppose the Bill; but he wished to call attention to the direction in which legislation was now going.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that he would not have introduced the Bill unless he had received assurances of its usefulness from those who were better able to judge of the matter than himself, and those who had a practical acquaintance with the question had assured him that it was likely to be advantageous, since the present system combined the maximum of hardship to the tenant with the minimum of advantage to the landlord, because when the tools of a skilled workman were sold they generally fetched very little, while the workman was deprived of his means of working.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 3^d accordingly; Amendments made; Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIFE-SAVING
APPLIANCES) BILL.—(No. 43.)

(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (*The Earl of Onslow*), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, observed that the subject of the better preservation of life at sea was one which had already engaged the attention of Parliament, and a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the whole subject. That Commission had dealt with the subject in a far more comprehensive manner than he now proposed to do in the present Bill. A Bill had also been introduced last year in "another place" which had been referred to a Select Committee. That Bill had dealt exclusively with the provision of boats and life-saving apparatus, and it was upon the Report of that Committee that the provisions of the present Bill were mainly founded. The subject had also aroused the attention of some of our Colonies, and representations had been made by the Governments of Tasmania, Queensland, and Victoria, to the effect that legislation should be initiated by the Imperial Parliament, in consequence of which the question had been discussed at the Colonial Conference. At the present time ships were divided into two classes; the first being "passenger ships"—namely, those only which carried emigrants, and other ships, which meant all ships, whether they carried passengers or cargo, provided they did not carry emigrants. The Passengers Act, 1855, provided that every passenger ship should carry a number of boats in proportion to her tonnage. A ship of under 200 tons was to carry two boats, under 400 three boats, under 600 four boats, under 1,000 five boats, and under 1,500 tons six boats; while a ship of over 1,500 tons, whatever might be her size, was only obliged to carry seven boats, no matter what amount of passengers she carried. It was also necessary to carry four lifebuoys only. Whether a ship carried passengers or not, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, she was obliged to carry the necessary complement of boats according to the scale

if she cleared from any port in the United Kingdom; if she did not, there was no compulsion to carry any life-saving apparatus whatever. Owing to the fact that that Act made demands far in excess of the actual requirements of the case, it had become practically a dead letter. By law a vessel could not be obliged to carry more than seven lifeboats. In 1873 power had been given to the Board of Trade to relieve shipowners who did not carry more than 12 passengers by diminishing the number of boats they were obliged to carry. It was not a general complaint that the large well-found steamers were insufficiently supplied with life-saving apparatus. If they took the *Cunard* steamers—for instance, the *Etruria*—the captain of that ship gave evidence that she carried, on the average, 1,000 persons; that she had 14 large boats capable of carrying 800, with 1,207 life-belts, one in each state room for every passenger, carried overhead in racks. Besides this there were bulkhead doors which were closed every day all through the ship by the chief engineer in his department and by the chief officer in the sailing department. All boats were lowered every Friday in Liverpool before they sailed; the boats were sent away from the ship manned; if there was any wind they sailed; if not, they were pulled; the boats were all ready for sea use, and all the 12 or 14 boats could be lowered into the water in the space of two minutes, and they were also provisioned with water. In the *City of New York*, lately launched, additional life-saving apparatus was provided in the shape of a false bottom, so that if one bottom was stove in the ship would still have the false one to keep the water out. Similar precautions in regard to boats were taken on board the steamers running between Calais and Dover, and Folkestone and Boulogne. But in short voyage ships, taking the average of 50 ships leaving the Port of Liverpool, the legal requirement of boat accommodation was found to be 7·6 per cent of the passengers carried; but the actual percentage was 10·6, and in those boats which crossed the Irish Channel the legal requirement was 13·1 and the actual percentage 16·1. There were life jackets for the crew only. But life-saving apparatus for only 10 or 16 per cent was very inadequate. These requirements

were based upon the tonnage of a ship and not on the number of passengers, and the tonnage of ships was very different from what it used to be owing to the deductions now made from the gross tonnage. He knew of a case where the tonnage from 300 gross had by various reductions been reduced to 6 net, and therefore the life-saving apparatus which the ship would be required to carry would be almost *nil*. It was also necessary to see that the apparatus was in a state of efficiency. Great complaints had been made on the part of seamen going to sea in cargo ships, not of the amount of boat accommodation provided, but on account of the state of that accommodation. There had been a case not long ago of a man falling overboard and being afloat for 25 minutes; they had been three-quarters of an hour before they got a boat over the side for the want of proper davits. The evidence was to the effect that the boat was on the after-house, turned upside down. They had to turn the boat over; and, finally, a sea had lifted her off the tackles and she had broken in two. At present the Surveyors of the Board of Trade were not empowered to go on board to inspect the life-saving apparatus; they could only inspect crew spaces, lights, and fog signals, unless they were Inspectors also, which they rarely were. Since 1875 the Board of Trade had only obtained four convictions against owners for want of proper boat accommodation and want of efficient life-saving appliances. It might be said that the most efficient mode of saving life at sea was to keep the vessel afloat by means of bulkheads; but, in dealing with these matters, we must not attempt to overweight the Bill, competition with foreign shipping was so keen. The value of boats for saving life was very great, notwithstanding the present inadequate provision. In the period of nine years between 1876 and 1885, of 135,273 lives which had been exposed to loss by wreck, 60,231 were actually saved by the ships' own boats, that was nearly two-thirds of the 109,745 saved, and nearly half of the whole lives that needed saving. We had lost on or near the coast 6,629 lives in the same period. We had fortunately saved 34,602 lives in the nine years, but by far the greatest proportion—namely, 14,807, had been saved by the ships'

own boats. The Bill would provide for a new departure in this legislation. The Government thought that those who were primarily interested had already endeavoured in some measure to do their duty. On the lines crossing the Atlantic and the Channel adequate provision far exceeding what was required by law had been made, and he thought we should be meeting the requirements of all concerned if we invited the owners and others interested to advise as to how this life-saving apparatus might be provided. First of all, there were the shipowners, then there were the shipbuilders, then the practical navigators, then the able seamen, and, lastly, the underwriters at Lloyd's. The Bill proposed that a Committee, composed of three of each of these classes, should be formed *ad hoc* for the purpose of classifying the different kinds of vessels, and then of making rules with regard to the life-saving apparatus to be carried by each. These rules would be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade, and would be laid upon the Table of that and the other House of Parliament, so that Parliament would have an opportunity of judging whether they would be efficient or not. As to inspection, any Surveyor or other person appointed by the Board of Trade might give notice to an owner that a ship should not clear if there was any deficiency. He did not claim that the result of this measure would be absolute immunity as regarded loss of life at sea; but he trusted that it would reduce the risks, and provide some remedy for a state of the law which was at present extremely anomalous and not suited to the requirements of the times. The boat scales in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, and Passengers Act, 1855, were framed upwards of 30 years ago to meet a different state of things than now existed. At that time nearly the whole of the passenger traffic was carried on by wooden sailing ships of about 1,200 to 1,500 tons burden. The boat scales were framed on the basis of the ship's registered tonnage, which, in those days of sailing ships, gave a very good idea of the vessel's size and of her capabilities for stowing boats, &c.; but now the sailing ships had entirely given place to iron or steel steamships of two or three times their size. Every merchant seaman on the North-East Coast was in favour of men

being provided with life-belts. He ventured to hope that the rules to be made by this Committee would be welcomed and cheerfully observed by all the interests concerned, and that, if these expectations were fulfilled, it might be possible to extend still further the principle of inviting all the interests affected by other such matters to unite in deciding what restrictions should be laid upon them for their common good. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."
—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

LORD COTTESLOE said, he heartily supported the principle of the Bill, which he earnestly hoped might conduce to the saving of life at sea. He would also suggest that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, something should be done to require the use of oil in cases of storm and shipwreck.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH said, that the object of the Bill was one which every man would approve, and he entirely agreed with the noble Lord who had moved the second reading that the present law was most unsatisfactory. It was more—it was extremely anomalous, and in some of its provisions almost absurd. But he wished to say that there was no class of men in this country who were more anxious to save life than the shipowners, and he was not in the least ashamed to tell their Lordships that the conviction had been forced upon his mind that, of all the traders of this country, the most capable of conducting their business were the shipowners. He regarded, therefore, with some degree of suspicion, or at least of jealousy, all those attempts to teach men a business which they knew much better than the Legislature. By Clause 2 the President of the Board of Trade, for the time being, was authorized to appoint a Consultative Committee to assist him in this particular matter. There were to be three representatives of each class concerned on that council, the selection of whom was to be left absolutely in the hands of the President of the Board of Trade. Now this council ought to consist of the most competent men in the country; but the most competent men had so much to do at home that they would be prevented from coming up to London, and waiting on the President of the Board of Trade

to teach him his business. He was much afraid that the persons who would be left to select from would be gentlemen who had nothing else to do, and who would be very glad of a run to London, at the public expense, if they had the opportunity. He thought that question would require considerable threshing out on the next stage of the Bill. He would further point out that what the Bill required to be done was practically done now by all the best shipowners in the country. Interference with a great industry should be confined to a minimum, and only to such matters as were absolutely necessary to protect life. The next point he wished to refer to was Clause 5, which provided for the inspection of ships for the purpose of enforcing the rules made by the Bill. That inspection was to be undertaken by a Surveyor appointed under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854, or any such other person as the President of the Board of Trade might appoint. Those words seemed to him very much too wide, and ought to be altered by adding some such words as "properly qualified." He had ventured to make these few remarks preparatory to the next stage of the Bill, because he thought it was only fair to point out defects in the Bill on the second reading, so that the Government might have an opportunity of considering them before the Committee stage was reached.

LORD SUDELEY said, he entirely agreed with the noble Earl who had introduced the Bill that the present state of the law was most anomalous. It was most important not to take the responsibility away from the shipowners, and that where ships were not well found there should be some regulations which would show what was desirable for saving life at sea. He agreed with the noble Earl who spoke last that the Consultative Committee should be composed of thoroughly practical men, but he could not but believe that the President of the Board of Trade would do his best to attain that object. It was shown in a discussion that place in that House some years ago that throwing oil on the water immediately around a ship had a very beneficial effect. He thought that if to every lifebuoy a bag of oil was attached much good might be done. When the buoy was thrown into the water the oil would trickle out, and

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there could be no doubt that that would smooth the water for some distance round the buoy. He thought that was a point worth consideration by the Board of Trade. He was extremely glad the Government had taken up this matter, and he sincerely hoped the Bill would be passed almost in its present shape.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, that as he had something to do with the earlier stages of the Bill he should like to say a word in support of it. He thought his noble Friend who had introduced the Bill with such a clear and able statement must be satisfied with the reception it had met with at the hands of their Lordships. No doubt, the Bill dealt with two very important questions. In the first place, it revised the boat scale; and, in the next place, it contained a provision by which the Board of Trade would be brought in future more directly in touch with some of the commercial interests. It had been said that the Board of Trade had been indifferent to the interests with which it had to deal; but he did not think that was a just accusation. No one who had not been at the Board of Trade could understand the difficulties which surrounded the Office of President, and the vast number of subjects with which he was called upon to deal. The subjects brought under the President's consideration ranged from lighthouses to bankruptcy, and from sea vessels to salmon fishing. It was, therefore, impossible that any man who undertook that Office could have a full knowledge of everything with which he had to deal. The noble Earl (the Earl of Ravensworth) appeared to think that the most competent men of their respective class would not be secured to act on the Consultative Committee. He could not agree with the noble Earl in this view. During his short experience of the Board of Trade he had found gentlemen, at great sacrifice of their valuable time, and often at much inconvenience to their own business, ready on all occasions to come forward freely and frankly to give the Department the benefit of their advice, and he desired to take this opportunity of acknowledging the debt of gratitude under which he lay to those gentlemen. He could well understand the feeling of shipowners towards the Board of Trade, for they certainly had

sometimes had a rough time of it. With regard to the method of constituting this Consultative Committee, he thought the mode proposed in the Bill—namely, that of the selection of three names out of nine names submitted by each of the respective bodies—was the best that could be devised. The Bill followed as closely as possible the recommendations of the Committee which sat last year to inquire into the subject, with Lord Charles Beresford as Chairman. The proposal in the Bill for constituting the Consultative Committee was the most practical form of giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee. The noble Earl seemed to make it a point of objection to this Bill that it merely provided for that which all good shipowners already made it a practice to do; but this was an argument in favour of the Bill—namely, that it would merely compel careless shipowners to take the precautions which good shipowners took already. Another excellent point of the Bill was that it aimed at securing its object by prevention rather than by penalty. In proceedings against a shipowner the jury were only too ready to give him the benefit of the doubt, and proceedings after a casualty had occurred were consequently found not to be effective. He hoped that this experiment of appointing a Consultative Committee to assist the Board of Trade would be followed in regard to other matters, but to appoint a general Consultative Council to assist the Board of Trade in regard to all its operations would be quite illusory, for men of great experience on some matters might be asked to express an opinion on others of which they had no especial knowledge. The appointment of Consultative Committees *ad hoc* for the purpose of dealing with the details of particular measures might, however, be very desirable and of great practical utility. Nothing would do more to break down that feeling of antagonism which in certain quarters unfortunately and unjustly existed against the Board of Trade. He was sure his noble Friend in charge of the Bill would give a full and fair consideration to any Amendment which might be brought forward with regard to the details of the Bill, and he believed that the Bill, when passed into law, would prove a most useful measure.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he welcomed the Bill most cordially, for it promised to be very useful and valuable. The most important provision in it was that contained in the 2nd clause, which, for the first time, established a Consultative Committee to assist the Board of Trade. There was much to be said in favour of such a Committee, but there was the danger attached to this proposal that it might diminish the responsibility of the Minister at the head of the Department. The matter required to be carefully watched. It would probably be a good plan if a Committee *ad hoc* were appointed whose views the Minister could consult, and after consulting whom he might form his own opinion, but the full responsibility of that opinion ought to rest upon him. He desired also to point out that in the case of the rules to be drawn up, and which were to be laid on the Table 40 days before they came into operation, it ought to be provided that the 40 days should only commence to run from the time that they were in print and circulated. He had known cases in which rules were laid on the Table in dummy, and the printed rules were only circulated 30 days after. This made the control of the House almost illusory.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that the suggestions made by the noble Earl who had just sat down and by other noble Lords who had spoken would be very carefully considered. In answer to the suggestion that the proposed Committee would weaken the authority and responsibility of the President of the Board of Trade, he would point out that then, as at the present time, he would make the rules, and would be responsible to Parliament for them.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly.

AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY SCHOOLS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD NORTON, in rising to ask the Lord President, Whether the Government contemplate taking any steps this Session on the Report of the Departmental Commission on Agricultural and Dairy Schools? said, that the proposal in the Report lacked definition and limit. It was, however, large enough in its outline, although it was called only a commencement. The proposal

was that there should be a Central Normal School of Agriculture, to be provided and maintained by the State; that existing endowed schools for the middle class should be utilized for teaching practical farming; that agricultural schools originated by local effort should be stimulated and assisted by Government aid for labourers, tenant farmers, and others; that district schools in selected districts, of various kinds, five in England and two in Scotland, should be at once set up under the control of the Central Department, and in the management of district committees; that gardens, allotments, and farms should be connected with rural elementary schools for the study of the principles of agriculture, scholarships of £50 a-year each being given to boys and girls who should pass the Sixth Standard in them; that district dairy schools should be established, and endowed with £500 a-year each, besides special grants for buildings and apparatus; that an annual grant of £3,000 should be put at the disposal of the Agricultural Department for original agricultural research; that diplomas from the Central School should be given for the highest qualification, which in agricultural studies was to include forestry, gardening, fruit-growing, poultry, and bee-keeping, besides all ordinary farm work; and in dairy studies was to include the rearing and feeding of stock, and making cheese. Such was the outline for commencement, and for the purpose it was not too large. But the question was whether the State could do all this best. South Kensington did not seem to him to be the true fountain of practical agricultural skill. Much was being done at the present time which State undertaking would supersede. The school in Cumberland was acknowledged to be a success, although the result of private enterprise. Then there was Cirencester, which was said to be too expensive for small farmers, but the scholarships and exhibitions of £100 a-year which this Report proposed would fully open it to their use. Evening classes were also being established for this purpose in country districts. Those actually engaged and interested in the advance of technical knowledge were everywhere making better provision for special apprenticeship than the doctrinaires of Government Departments could possibly make by State schools

within definite programmes. At most, the State ought to provide central training for teachers, and exhibitions to aid poor talent. There was already on the Estimates a proposal to give £5,000 to begin the work recommended by the Commission, and a promise had been made of a Bill for a Minister of Agriculture. A Department of Agriculture under the Council Office existed in Parliament Street, and in connection with the Local Government Bill more shadowy forms of coming aid appeared. Some clearer indication should be given of what was intended before steps were taken which would make mistake irremediable.

EARL SPENCER asked, when the Government proposed to lay on the Table the Evidence on which the Report of the Departmental Commission was founded? It seemed to him important that they should have the Evidence before they considered the recommendations made in the Report, as there were many points that required to be elucidated by the Evidence.

LORD VERNON said, he was glad of an opportunity to express the gratitude that a considerable section of the agricultural community felt for the patience and consideration Her Majesty's Government had evinced in dealing with all matters relating to the industry in which they were interested. Commissions had been appointed to inquire into every subject that had been suggested as a possible remedy for the existing depression, which, although the agriculturist had exercised his prerogative of grumbling at, was, as the noble Marquess told them on Monday, not unique to this country, or confined to this one branch of industry, most departments of trade having suffered in a like ratio. The subject of State-aided agricultural education had been an almost unknown thing in this country up to the present time. The Commission of which Sir Richard Paget was the Chairman recommended that dairy schools should be assisted by funds to carry on their operations, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer very wisely remarked that he must be convinced of the utility of such schools before he assented to grants being given them. By that, presumably, he meant their utility from a national point of view. In order to convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Commission quoted as a re-

markable instance of what education had done for Denmark, her imports of butter to this country having increased from 80,589 cwt. in 1867 to 210,322 cwt. in 1877, and to 487,603 cwt. in 1887. But this increase might be accounted for by studying the prices realized, which were as follows:—104s. per cwt. in 1867, 128s. in 1877, and 109s. in 1887. No doubt that 104s. in 1867 paid the Danish farmer. When, therefore, the price rose to 128s. in 1877, it showed an undue margin of profit, and stimulated him to further efforts, and the production had increased in proportion. But the question was if there were many farmers who would be satisfied with such a price for their butter on the average of 12 months, except in the most primitive districts, and if the dairy produce made in England was of an inferior character to that imported from Denmark or elsewhere—if this were proved, then, indeed, we had reason to inquire what could be done to raise the standard of home-made goods; but even in that case it rested with the landowners to improve the produce of their estates. If we were living under a system of peasant proprietors—or even as in Denmark, where the soil was greatly subdivided owing partly to the state of the law, which interdicted the union of small farms into large estates, but encouraged in various ways the parcelling out of landed property, and left the tenant entire control of his land so long as the rent was paid—it might be advisable to aid those who were unable to acquire the knowledge necessary for obtaining the best return from their holdings. But with large estates and well-organized, powerful agricultural societies, such as the Royal Agricultural Society, with 9,000 members, and subscriptions amounting to £9,000 annually, it did seem unnecessary to subsidize new schools. As Professor Wrightson observed last week, in the Paper he read before the Society of Arts, the paternal principle of government had never found favour in England. Almost everything in the way of advancement was left to private and corporate enterprise, and the results of this system of self-help had been magnificent. Further on he said—

“Dairy farmers, the men above all others singled out for assistance, have been exceptionally fortunate. No class of men have progressed more rapidly with the times. They have wiped out the obloquy of a few years ago with regard to the alleged inferiority of their butter and cheese,

and these English products are once more equal, if not superior, to those imported from Denmark, Brittany, and Normandy."

With this opinion and the evidence gained from the Agricultural Returns, it would be absurd to say that dairy farmers had not made great strides of late years in Great Britain; and they would undoubtedly continue to do so on those estates where the tenants were not paralyzed by too heavy payments of rent, tithe, and taxes. If, however, they were overburdened with charges of this description, they would be unable to hold their own when brought into competition with the whole world, and no amount of State-aided education would achieve the desired result—that of enabling them to pay such an interest on their capital as would satisfy their requirements. In conclusion, he would urge on Her Majesty's Government, if they saw the advisability of acceding to the recommendations of the Commission, not to enter into the speculation suggested of buying a 200-acre farm near Rugby for, say, £12,000, but to hand over the money to the Royal Agricultural Societies of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to be utilized by them in disseminating dairy knowledge throughout the entire Kingdom, a course not involving the present or any succeeding Government in an obligation to continue such grants, and one that would from the past history of those societies assure the money being expended for the benefit of practical agriculture.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, that the special knowledge which was known to be possessed by the noble Lord who had just spoken would induce their Lordships to attach great weight to his observations. With respect to the Question that was put by the noble Lord behind him, he felt some difficulty in answering it. A Question had been put in the other House, and the Government intimated that a Minister of Agriculture was to be appointed, if Parliament should sanction it, with whom it would naturally rest to determine what should be done in the matter. As Head, at present, of the Department charged with the interests of agriculture, he might say that, even without adopting the suggestions of the Commission as embodied in their Report, he still felt that there would be many

opportunities, in the course of the present year, of rendering assistance to some extent in aid of local effort, and in consonance with the principle of self-help which the noble Lord opposite had just commended. He regretted very much that the two Reports had not been accompanied by the Evidence. It was in print, but he could not say how soon it would be laid before the House. He would, however, take steps to ascertain how soon it could be produced, because it was very desirable that those who took a special interest in the matter should be cognizant of the Evidence which had been laid before the Commission. It would be observed that in that Commission, as in many others, a good many leading questions were put, which showed pretty clearly the bias which suggested them. When witnesses had a pecuniary subsidy dangled before their eyes, it was not to be expected that they should have the moral courage of the noble Lord opposite and say they would rather not have it. There were some who, to a certain extent, did so; but it would be found that some of those who managed dairies skilfully and with success fully appreciated the value of their own excellent practice. Many inquiries had been made of him by deputations and others upon this subject. A large deputation from Scotland had asked that whatever assistance was given should be extended equitably to that country, and had urged that too much importance was attached to dairies in comparison with other branches of agriculture. Indeed, they said that the least depressed interest was that of dairy farming, and that other departments of agriculture required more teaching and more assistance than dairy farming, while they by no means desired to check any support to that calling. There had not been much done in the way of practical teaching in connection with the Science and Art Department. A certain amount was expended from year to year; but it was mainly upon what might be called theoretical teaching and book learning rather than practical agriculture. There was a time when there was in this country agricultural instruction connected with elementary schools; but it was done away with, because it was found that it interfered with the gaining of grants for general education. In agricultural districts boys left the ele-

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mentary schools at an early age, and it was necessary that they should in early youth acquire a knowledge of horses and other animals; and that was knowledge of a more practical kind than they could acquire by gardens or allotments in the neighbourhood of a school. It might be desirable to provide by small scholarships for assisting some boys to obtain a more scientific knowledge of the business in which they were to be employed. But, after all, he could not help thinking that for the bulk of the lads the best instruction in agriculture would be instruction gained on the land itself. It was impossible in schools, except, perhaps, in evening schools, to gain time for special instruction, and it was to the farmers we must look to train the boys they required to do their work. He had heard that an agricultural school had been recently set up in Glasgow for the training of young farmers. Those were assisted by landlords, and considerable numbers attended the classes from a distance. That seemed to him the right sort of beginning. He could not hold out any hope that anything would be done in the way of distinct State foundations during the present year. The so-called Agricultural Department were not in a position at present to make the inquiries which would be necessary for an undertaking of such magnitude. He might mention that the Veterinary part of the Department of the Council had met with an approbation throughout the country which was almost remarkable, considering the very unpleasant duties which it had to discharge in enforcing the law with regard to diseased cattle, and endeavouring to prevent the spread of infection. With regard to the Agricultural Department more recently set up, it had been proceeding by degrees; but strong representations had been made to him that it was very desirable there should be greater strength infused into it; and he was of opinion that it needed it. The Department was beginning to attract a great deal of attention throughout the country; and he might promise on its behalf that the representations in question would be carefully considered. He trusted that the agriculturists would succeed in deriving substantial benefit from the new Ministry if established. Practically, his answer amounted to this. He believed the Department would re-

ceive from the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year a sum which would be expended in obtaining information as to the real needs of the country, and in giving assistance, as far as possible, to local efforts in testing the advantages which might be derived from the present condition of teaching in this country. The Department did not hold out the expectation that the State was going to do everything; but if the localities showed that they were really in need of assistance by taking steps themselves, the Department would be prepared to assist them this year with a view to further action if, with sufficient knowledge, it was found desirable to go further in the matter.

THE CHESHIRE CONSTABULARY— COMPENSATION TO POLICE—CON- STABLES COOPER AND PROUDLOVE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether they have taken any steps to secure reward or compensation to two police officers named Cooper and Proudlove for the very serious injuries received by them from a gang of thieves near Bowden Station? The circumstances which gave rise to his Question were that a gang of poachers, finding the night too light to go after rabbits, had stolen 17 geese from a farmyard pond. Information had been given to the police, and two officers went after the thieves. They took refuge in a railway hut; but, finding there were only three policemen, they said—"Let us go out and murder them." Accordingly, they went out and so battered the heads of Sergeant Cooper and Police-constable Proudlove that for some time their lives were despaired of. Two men were put on their trial for this affair; one got six months, the other proved an *alibi*. Two other men were tried on the 7th of this month, at Chester, for feloniously wounding the two police officers, and both got eight years' penal servitude. These police officers had shown great courage in pursuing so large a number of thieves, and he thought the Government might well go out of its way to show its approbation of their conduct. He asked the attention of the Government to the fact that in Cheshire and the adjoining counties, with the exception of the

district round Liverpool, of late years the gangs of marauders had increased in number and in lawlessness, and he dated this increase from the time Sir William Harcourt occupied the Home Office. It was not owing alone or so much to his speeches at the time of passing the Hares and Rabbits Bill, though those, no doubt, had contributed to this result; but the encouragement to lawlessness and violence which he and his Friends had given in Ireland had had their bad effects in this country also.

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (EARL BROWNLOW): The Government have received a Report from the Chief Constable of Cheshire, from which it appears that these two police officers received very serious injuries while endeavouring to arrest a gang of men who were stealing geese on the night of November 5, 1887. The policemen appear to have displayed great courage and British pluck in the encounter which took place, and I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to their bravery. At the same time, I must point out that it is for the Court of Quarter Sessions, and not for the Government, to take such steps as they think proper to secure reward or compensation to members of the County Police Force, where, in the opinion of the Court, special gallantry has been displayed or serious injuries received in the discharge of their ordinary duties.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the mode of appointment, the duties, and the obligations of the high sheriffs of counties, and to report."—(*The Earl of Camperdown*.)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, he had great pleasure in acceding to the Motion on the part of the Government.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Joint Committee with the Committee of the House of Commons appointed to examine into the present system of Private Bill legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of costs and charges: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

Lord Stanley of Alderley

E. Bathurst. L. Colville of Culross.
L. Balfour of Burley. L. Stalbridge.
L. Monk Bretton. L. Kensington.

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the Commons in the appointment of a chairman.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Abp. Canterbury. V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*).
E. Spencer. L. Balfour.
E. Milltown. L. Hopetoun (*E. Hopetoun*).
E. Onslow. L. Thring.
E. Stafford.
E. Kimberley.

The Committee to meet *To-morrow* at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

Read 1st; to be printed; and to be read 2^d *To-morrow*; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*.) (No. 49.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till *To-morrow*, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby, for the County of Leicester (Eastern or Melton Division).

SELECT COMMITTEE—Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners); Mr. Cremer and Mr. Samuel Hoare added.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—Customs, Isle of Man—R.P.

Ordered—*First Reading*—Secondary Education (Scotland) * [187]; Legal Proceedings (Reports) * [188]; Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * [189].

Second Reading—Criminal Evidence * [132]; Statute Law Revision * [186]; Mortmain and Charitable Uses * [174]; Westminster Abbey * [165], *debate adjourned*.

Committee—Report—Army (Annual) * [179].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt (Conversion) * [164], and *passed*.

Withdrawn—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) * [147]; Railway Regulation * [84].

QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL TOLLS ON GRAIN—CORPORATION OF GUILDFORD.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the

Board of Trade, If it is a fact that the Corporation of Guildford levies a toll on all wheat and other grain, whether British grown or foreign, brought into the municipal market for sale; to what purposes the proceeds are devoted; if any complaint, by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers, has been received upon the subject; and, if there are any other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the United Kingdom, besides the Corporation of London, who, being duly empowered by law, levy a duty upon imports of grain into the locality under their jurisdiction for local purposes?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): With regard to the first part of the Question, the Town Clerk of Guildford informs the Board of Trade that a toll is taken, not on all wheat and other grain brought into the market at Guildford, but only on all wheat sold in the market. This toll is one pint per sack; and the corn taken as toll is ultimately sold, and the proceeds paid into the Treasurer of the Borough to the credit of the Borough Fund—that is, the proceeds are devoted in aid of the borough rate. No complaint has, to the Town Clerk's knowledge, been made to the Corporation by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers on the subject of this toll. With regard to the latter part of the Question—namely, as to whether duties on grain brought into a particular locality are levied by other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the country—the Board of Trade are aware that such duties are levied by some Harbour Authorities, and they believe they are levied by other City and Borough Authorities as regards articles brought into markets; but they have no official information in detail as to what is done by cities and boroughs. As the hon. Member is aware, a Royal Commission is now inquiring as to market rights and tolls.

BRITISH INDIA—ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY.

MR. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will provide, for the use of hon. Members of this House, a map showing the additions that have been made to the territory of British India

since 1870, by annexation and otherwise; and providing references to the various Treaties, arrangements, and Proclamations under which those additions have been effected?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The only additions of any importance made to the territory of British India since 1870 are Upper Burmah and the districts on the North-Western Frontier. There may have been trifling rectifications of frontier elsewhere, by exchange with Native States, as to which no certain information could be given without reference to India. A map will be prepared and laid upon the Table showing the districts added last year on the North-Western Frontier, with the references asked for. But it is impossible to do the same thing in reference to Upper Burmah, as the frontier still remains to be marked out by the Commission agreed to in the Convention with China of 1886.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND) — MR. WATERS, COUNTY COURT JUDGE OF WATERFORD, &c.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been drawn to the numerous instances in which the decisions of Mr. Waters, County Court Judge for the Counties of Waterford, Leitrim, and Cavan, in the exercise of the discretionary jurisdiction entrusted to Chairmen of Quarter Sessions by the Land Act of 1887, have been reversed by Mr. Justice Andrews at the County Cavan Spring Assizes; and, whether he has any power of providing for the consistent administration of justice?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: County Court Judges hold during good behaviour, and the Lord Chancellor has no jurisdiction to interfere with them in the exercise of their judicial discretion. All suitors dissatisfied with the decisions of a County Court Judge in Civil cases can appeal to the Judge of Assize, a right which appears to have been availed of in the instances referred to.

CHILDREN'S DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES ACT, 1879—EXHIBITION IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the public exhibitions of young children in acrobatic and other performances apparently dangerous to the life and limbs of children now taking place in the Metropolis, If it is the duty of the Metropolitan Police, or of the Metropolitan Board of Works, or of what other Public Authority, to take action, where necessary, under the provisions of "The Children's Dangerous Performances Act, 1879?"

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Statute referred to does not give the power, or impose the duty, of taking action upon the police or the Metropolitan Board of Works or any Public Authority. The Act leaves it open to any person, or Society, to initiate a prosecution in a proper case. I understand that there is a Society which has occasionally taken proceedings under this Act.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — FAIR RENTS—SUB-COMMISSION IN LONDONDERRY.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How soon a Sub-Commission will sit in the County of Londonderry to hear applications for a fair rent under the provisions of the Land Act of last year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that they have not fixed the date for the next sitting of a Sub-Commission in the County Londonderry.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES —MILLBANK PENITENTIARY.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, and when, it is intended to remove Millbank Penitentiary from its present site; and, whether, in the event of its removal, the Government will endeavour to give effect to the suggestion contained in the Report of

the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, that this site should be used for "workmen's dwellings and for open spaces connected therewith"?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; it is intended to discontinue the use of Millbank Penitentiary in the course of the present year. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Government will endeavour to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners on this head, so far as they can consistently with the provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — JOHN CLARKE AND WIFE, PRISONERS IN SLIGO GAOL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that John Clarke, of Cornakelly, County Longford, and his wife are at present undergoing a term of imprisonment in Sligo Gaol; when, and by whom, were they committed; what is their offence; and, how long are they to be kept in prison?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that the prisoners referred to are in custody in Sligo Gaol. They were committed on the 23rd of August, 1887, by order of the Land Judges for re-taking forcible possession of their holding after they had been evicted by the Sheriff of Longford. They will be released at the expiration of 12 months from the date of their conviction, or on payment of the rent and costs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the order of committal prescribe their release on payment of the rent and costs?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot say.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat that portion of his answer which gave the payment of the rent and costs as a condition precedent to the release?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: They are committed for contempt of Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat the latter part of his answer?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I stated that they would be released in 12 months, or on payment of the rent and costs due.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state what is the ransom which will procure their release?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; certainly not, without Notice.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the fact that the powers to appoint Deputy Official Receivers are limited by "The Bankruptcy Act, 1883," to a period not exceeding two months, and that such appointments were intended to be temporary only, he will state for what period or periods a deputy, and who, has been appointed for the Official Receiver for Guildford; and, what steps are taken by the Board of Trade before they nominate a deputy to satisfy themselves that he is a fit person?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): There is at present no Deputy Official Receiver at Guildford; but the Board of Trade have, from time to time, appointed Mr. Britten, the Chief Clerk of the Official Receiver, to act as deputy during his temporary absence, as provided by the Bankruptcy Act. In no case has such appointment exceeded the period of two months specified by the Act. Before any such authority is granted the Board of Trade invariably require a Report upon the qualifications of the Official Receiver's nominee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COM- MISSION IN MONAGHAN.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When a Sub-Commission Court sat under the Land Act in Monaghan; whether he is aware that a large number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and that, although entitled to a reduced rent if decreed by the Court, they are being called upon to pay the full year's rent; and, if he will take steps to expedite the settlement of these cases?

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) also asked, when the Land Sub-Commission will sit in Clones, County Monaghan?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission sat in the County Monaghan during the months of October, November, and December last. No date has yet been fixed for the next sitting. It appears that on one estate in the county a number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and have been called upon to pay the full year's rent; but that, pending the decision of the Court, 20 per cent reduction is allowed to those who pay their rents within a specified time. As I stated in the House the day before yesterday, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the existing arrears in applications awaiting a hearing.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—THE BRISTOL CHANNEL.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any intention of the Government to act upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1859, and of more than one Select Committee, to construct a Harbour of Refuge in the Bristol Channel; and, if so, when it will be commenced; what has been the loss of vessels and lives in the Bristol Channel since the Royal Commission recommended the construction of this Harbour of Refuge; and, whether it is a fact that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is at the present moment at least one-fifth part of the whole of England?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The matter to which the noble Lord refers is one in which, as one of the Members for Bristol, I am naturally much interested. I am sorry that I cannot give him the number of vessels lost in the Bristol Channel; but the number of lives lost by wrecks and casualties (excluding collisions and missing vessels) since 1859 is 1,314. The noble Lord is correct in supposing that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is about one-fifth part of that of the whole of England. As regards the intentions of the Government, I am

afraid, notwithstanding what I have stated, that I can only repeat that the Government have no intention of departing from the policy pursued by successive Governments in past years, under which they have hitherto declined to make grants of money for harbour construction except in cases of Imperial and National necessity.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL— SMALL ANNUITANTS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can include in the Conversion Scheme a clause by which annuitants of from £20 to £100 per annum shall be provided against any loss in their income, thereby preventing distress and embarrassment, by increasing their poverty, of widows, many with children to support, and other poor people wholly dependent upon small annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, if the hon. Member had followed the course of the Bill dealing with the Conversion of the National Debt, he would have seen that all that could be done had been done by enabling Trustees, with regard to these annuities, to vary the investment, and to invest in the proceeds of such Stock as was liable to conversion into Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, beyond which it was impossible to go.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—ADVANCES.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statement in *The Standard* of the 16th instant, to the effect—

"That of the £5,000,000 authorized by Lord Ashbourne's Act to be advanced to tenants for the purchase of their holdings, £4,500,000 had been applied for up to the end of February,"

is correct; and, if so, whether the Government intend, during the present Session, to introduce a Bill to promote the further operation of the said Act?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The amount applied for up to the end of February was £4,700,000; but that includes £390,000 which was re-

fused. The amount applied for and not refused is, therefore, something under the figure stated in the Question. Of this, however, only £3,680,000 has as yet been actually sanctioned; so that there remains considerably over £1,000,000 undisposed of. The Government are carefully considering the question as to the course which it may be best to pursue in these circumstances.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF MAILS TO THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Why the Post Office pays £2,500 a-year for an acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith, where there is a limited population, and refuses to accelerate the same mail from Perth to the North, embracing a district of seven counties, containing a population of nearly 400,000 people?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The so-called acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith consisted chiefly in the abolition of the interval of several hours which previously existed between the arrival of the mail train from the South at Aberdeen and the despatch Northward. The new arrangement, while effecting this object and providing for an earlier delivery of a large amount of correspondence, also secured a convenient through service for mails from Aberdeenshire to the North, *via* Inverness. The case of the down London day mail from Perth, on the Highland Railway, is very different. There is no undue detention at Perth to get rid of. The line from Perth to Thurso and Wick runs for several hundred miles through sparsely-populated districts with few towns of any considerable size except Inverness; and there is already expended on the conveyance of the mails, which includes two through mails a-day in each direction, so large a payment that no additional expense for the purpose of accelerating either service will be warranted.

POST OFFICE—UNIFORMS IN LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case that vests are supplied as part of Post Office uniform to first-class postmen in London, whilst

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vests, at one time supplied, are no longer supplied to first-class postmen in Edinburgh; if so, what is the reason for the discontinuance of that article of clothing in the case of Edinburgh; and, whether, if postmen can go without vests in Edinburgh, they cannot equally go without them in London?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Vests are supplied to the first-class town postmen in London. Vests have at no time been supplied to postmen in Edinburgh. Postmen in Edinburgh are supplied with a tunic which should always be worn buttoned; therefore, the necessity for a vest does not exist. Postmen in London are supplied with an open coat, for which a vest is needed; hence the difference between the two classes of uniform.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sergeant Noble, of the Quinn Police Barrack, County Clare, has been looking for the site of a police hut, wherein extra police are to be placed, within sight of the priest's residence; whether the regular County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one to every 280 of the population; whether this Force is sufficient to carry out the law; and, for what purpose is it proposed to quarter extra men in sight of the priest's house?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, I am informed that the sergeant referred to did look for a site for a police hut at a place which happens to be within view of the priest's residence; but that circumstance had nothing whatever to do with its selection. The nominal County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one man to every 257 of the population. The portion of the Force available for Quinn and its neighbourhood has recently been obliged to be frequently strengthened by sending extra police there to suppress illegal meetings; and to obviate the necessity and expense of sending these men the Divisional Magistrate has been considering the question of quartering a reserve force in the locality, which will be chargeable therewith.

MR. DILLON: Would the right hon. and gallant Gentleman inform the House, whether any illegal meetings have been held in that district; and, whether any crime or outrage has recently taken place in the district?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Illegal meetings have been held—or are reported to have been held—in the district.

MR. DILLON: Do I understand the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to say that because meetings have been reported to have been held extra police have been sent in? I would remind the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that he stated to me in this House, only a fortnight ago, that these reports would not be accepted as evidence that the meetings were held.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The evidence we have is statements that meetings have been held; and that meetings will be held, no matter whether extra police are brought in or not.

EGYPT—THE NEW EGYPTIAN LOAN.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement in Sir Evelyn Baring's last Despatch to the Marquess of Salisbury, to the effect that the new Egyptian Loan was to be for £E5,000,000; and, whether this is true; and, if so, for what purposes the money is required?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The exact amount of the new Loan, as has been already stated, has not been positively settled, so far, at least, as Her Majesty's Government are aware. The chief objects are those already explained—namely, to carry out the arrangement made with the ex-Khedive and his family, which requires the liberation of lands pledged in security for the Domains Loan; and, secondly, to liberate lands similarly pledged to be granted to pensioners in commutation of their allowances. It will depend on the amount of the Loan how far the operation of converting pensions into grants of Domain Land is carried. As such conversions operate to the relief of the Egyptian Exchequer, the operation is, from a financial point of view, sound and desirable, provided the Loan can be effected on advantageous terms.

MR. DILLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what position the new Loan will hold with regard to the Privileged Unified Loan?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The new Loan must rank after the old one.

POST OFFICE—AUSTRALIAN AND CAPE LETTERS—OVERWEIGHT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Has his attention been called to the fact that, if any letter posted for Australia or the Cape of Good Hope happens to weigh a grain over half an ounce, the charge for postage is doubled—that is, from 6d. to 1s.; and, has he any intention to alter this Regulation, or consult with the Colonial Governments on the question?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is quite true that a letter exceeding the prescribed weight allowed for a single rate of postage is charged an additional postage rate. This Rule applies generally to letters for all parts of the world, and not alone to Australia and the Cape of Good Hope. Obviously, a limit of weight must be fixed in all cases; and I have no intention, as at present advised, of proposing any exception from the practice which has universally obtained with respect to this matter.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE GRANTHAM BOROUGH BENCH—HEAVY SENTENCE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) (for Mr. BROADBURST) (Nottingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a sentence of seven days' hard labour, passed by the Grantham Borough Bench upon an old man of 73 years of age, for the offence of going into a greengrocer's shop and begging for an onion; and, if so, whether he can consider the advisability of mitigating this sentence?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the convicting magistrate on this case, from which it appears that this man has been well known to the police and to the magistrate personally for many years as a regular and persistent able-bodied beggar. I am told that he has for a

long time been a nuisance to passengers in the streets, to tradesmen, and especially to females. Frequent complaints of his conduct have been made to the police. He gave his age to the police as 67, and not 73. Under the circumstances, I cannot advise any interference with the sentence.

INDIA—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will consent to a Return showing the amounts paid during the past three years by the Government of India to the Irrawaddy Flotilla; and, in what respect, under what conditions, and for what services, such moneys have been paid?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State will consult the Government of India as to the expediency of having such a Return prepared. It would take some time, as the information would have to be procured from Burmah. The moneys are paid under contract with the Company for the conveyance of mails, troops, stores, prisoners, police, &c.

MR. BRADLAUGH inquired, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that great dissatisfaction was expressed in Burmah and India as to the amounts received by the Company?

SIR JOHN GORST: No; I cannot admit that fact.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTIONS AT BALLINAMORE BRIDGE.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Messrs. Ferguson and Finlay, who were prosecuted at the late Petty Sessions at Ballinamore Bridge, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for speaking at a meeting held at Newbridge, and the latter gentleman convicted on the evidence of constables who took no notes at the meeting; whether a car driver who refused to carry police, not having been employed for the purpose, was prevented for some time from going home by Mr. Purcell, R.M., and his horse and car forcibly seized; under what statute Mr. Purcell acted in having

him detained; whether, in the disturbance which took place in consequence of the action of the police, several parties were arrested; whether the prisoners were assaulted by the police on their way to and while in the barrack in custody; whether Mr. Purcell refused substantial bail for the appearance of the prisoners, both on that occasion and after two subsequent remands; and, whether the prisoners will have been detained a month in custody before the date of the monthly Petty Sessions?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The prosecutions referred to were for speeches urging the people to enter into an unlawful conspiracy. Finlay was convicted on the evidence of the police, who had noted the proceedings immediately after the meeting at which he spoke. As regards the car driver, he had been employed by Mr. Beckett, one of the Resident Magistrates, to convey him between Ballinasloe and Ballinamore; but he refused to drive him back to Ballinasloe, as the Resident Magistrate wished to have a constable accompanying him. Mr. Beckett was, therefore, obliged to proceed by another car, along with the Sessional Crown Solicitor, who had conducted the prosecution. The demeanour of the car driver in question was offensive and defiant; and Mr. Purcell did not consider it advisable to allow him to follow immediately after the two gentlemen named, as his doing so would have led to a hostile demonstration and a breach of the peace, as at the time a great many people were about. Mr. Purcell accordingly detained him for about 15 minutes. He did so by virtue of his office as a magistrate, and to prevent a breach of the peace. A policeman who got upon the car was savagely attacked by a number of men with sticks and severely injured. Other members of the constabulary were struck with stones, and otherwise assaulted. For these assaults four men were arrested and remanded for a week to Galway Prison. There does not appear to be any ground for the allegation of an assault by the police. The attack upon the police was wanton and unprovoked. The Resident Magistrate did refuse bail. The prisoner's solicitor, in making application for a consent to bail on the

expiration of the first remand, stated in his letter that if the bail were refused the Queen's Bench would interfere; but he does not appear to have brought the matter before that Court. The prisoners will have been detained a month in custody, if not discharged before next Petty Sessions at Ballinamore.

MR. HAYDEN: Does the right hon. and gallant Gentleman deny that the prisoners were assaulted after arrest by the police in the barrack?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I have no information to the effect that they were. I know that the police were violently assaulted before.

NAVY—H.M.S. "HERO."

MR. LEATHAM BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Government is aware that iron girders have been placed under the engines of the *Hero* for the purpose of strengthening them; whether these girders have been placed in position by the responsible engineers of the Government; and who is to bear the expense of the alteration?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Some small additional strengthening brackets have been fitted to the engine bearers of the *Hero*. Being part of the hull structure, they were fitted in place by the Dockyard; and as all work on engine bearers, including these additions, is outside the engine contract, the expense is borne by the Admiralty.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE LAKE IN BATTERSEA PARK.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether he is aware that the Lake in Battersea Park is in a foul and dangerous state, and contains 19 inches of silt and mud; and, whether it is the intention of the Metropolitan Board of Works to remedy the evil without delay?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the Metropolitan Board of Works was aware of the bad condition of the Lake; and measures would be immediately taken by the Board to clear away the deposit from the bottom of the Lake, and to restore the piece of Ornamental Water to a good condition.

**TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT
ACT, 1886—THE SALVATION ARMY.**

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a statement, signed by 500 ratepayers of Torquay, as follows:—

"That we have known the Salvation Army to conduct marches with music through the streets of our town on Sundays and week days, ever since the commencement of their services here six years ago; that we did not know that it was proposed to insert in the Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886, any clause prohibiting such marches, and that such clause only came to our knowledge after the passing of the Act; that it is not our wish that any member of the Salvation Army should be fined or imprisoned for taking part in such processions;"

and, whether he would be prepared to consider the advisability of a Standing Order relating to Private Bills which should require that any Bill containing Police Clauses should bear the word "Police" in its title?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a statement to the effect described in the Question. The hon. Member is, doubtless, aware that by Standing Order 173a Committees of this House are required to bring clauses of this kind to the notice of the House by specially reporting upon them; and by Standing Order 33a, passed last year at the instance of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), Bills proposing to create—

"Powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from or are repugnant to the general laws,"

have to be deposited at the Home Office. In the case of the Torquay Bill, 1886, the Home Office reported against the clause in question, on the ground that it was—

"A question for general legislation and should be struck out."

I do not see that the proposal of the hon. Member would add much to these existing safeguards; but if he will place on the Paper such a Standing Order as he suggests, I shall be glad to consult with the Authorities of the House as to the propriety of its passing.

THE LICENSING LAWS—CLUBS.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to

the proposals for diminishing the number of licensed public houses, it is the intention of the Government, during the present Session, to bring in a Bill dealing with Clubs in which intoxicating liquors are sold, with a view to diminishing their number, and placing them under the like restrictions and charges as public houses?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The question is how to deal with Bogus Clubs, of which complaint is so justly made, without unduly interfering with the *bona fide* Club. It is a very important question; but it is also one very difficult of solution. As my hon. and learned Friend knows, the Government has been considering the matter, and is still considering it; and I shall be very glad, indeed, if we can see any way of dealing with it.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL (ENGLAND
AND WALES)—THE METROPOLITAN
BOARD OF WORKS.**

BARON DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) (for Mr. KENYON) (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the proposals made by the President of the Local Government Board, which may affect the position of the Metropolitan Board of Works, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to persevere with the appointment of a Royal Commission; and, whether any steps will be taken to limit the powers of the Board, *ad interim*, as regards their expenditure on sewerage experiments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; certainly. The Government were aware of these proposals when they assented to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the past working of the Board. The Government are not in possession of any information to justify their interference with the progress of any works now being undertaken by the Board.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would state the names of the Commissioners the Government proposed to appoint, and when the Bill would be introduced into the House; or, if he could not answer the Questions now, when would he be able to do so? He would remind the right hon. Gentle-

man that five weeks or more had elapsed since the promise of the Government was made.

MR. MATTHEWS: In answer to my noble Friend, I have to state that the Commissioners have been appointed. They are Lord Herschell, who presides over the Commission, a well-known and eminent Queen's Counsel; Mr. Bosanquet; and a Director of the Bank of England, Mr. Henry Grenfell. Instructions have been given for drafting the Bill to constitute the Commission, and it will be brought forward with as little delay as possible.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked, whether the inquiry respecting the Metropolitan Board of Works would be retrospective?

MR. MATTHEWS said, his recollection was that the Reference to the Commission was precisely in the terms of the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord Raudolph Churchill)—an inquiry "into the working" of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He understood that would include the whole of the working from the beginning; but he assumed the Commissioners would exercise some discretion as to the manner in which they would conduct the inquiry.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE OVER SENEGAL, &c.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government can communicate any information relative to the Protectorate, which it is reported the French Governor of Senegal has established, and also relative to the rule which he is endeavouring to administer over a part of the Gambia Territories, which for many years have formed part of the British Dependencies on the West Coast of Africa; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government is taking to obtain the withdrawal of French troops and the restoration of British influence in these territories?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The French have not formally declared any Protectorate in the manner stated in the Question, but have lately advanced into territories bordering on the River Gambia. They have, however, checked their progress in deference

to representations from Her Majesty's Government, with a view to friendly discussion of the question of boundaries and of spheres of influence.

LAW AND POLICE — ASSAULTS ON CHILDREN — SENTENCE ON ANN GUTHRIE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Ann Guthrie, charged before the magistrates at the City Police Court, at Liverpool, on Friday last, with assaulting Mary Conroy, aged 13 years; whether it was proved that Guthrie, after repeated assaults, had finally broken the child's arm by kicking; whether the magistrates informed Guthrie that she was liable to six months' imprisonment, but afterwards permitted her to leave the Court on paying a compensation of £5; and, whether he will take steps to secure the better protection of children from savage assaults resulting in serious physical injuries, by insuring that those guilty of such assaults shall be adequately punished?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Justices on this case, who inform me that, although the woman had struck the child repeatedly with a boot, it was not proved to their satisfaction that the child's arm had been broken by kicking. A lodger in defendant's house stated that he had not on any previous occasion known the woman to ill-use the child, who appeared to be habitually well treated. The defendant expressed regret that she had lost her temper on the occasion in question. It is true that the defendant was informed by the magistrates that she had rendered herself liable to six months' imprisonment; but as the injury seemed to them one for which the girl ought to receive compensation, and as in case of conviction she would be debarred from enforcing any such claim, they deemed it best in her interest to allow the summons to be withdrawn on payment of £5 (to be invested in the girl's name in the Post Office Savings Bank) and £1 1s. costs. The hon. Member is aware that I cannot increase the punishment imposed by magistrates in the exercise of the discretion which the law allows them.

district round Liverpool, of late years the gangs of marauders had increased in number and in lawlessness, and he dated this increase from the time Sir William Harcourt occupied the Home Office. It was not owing alone or so much to his speeches at the time of passing the Hares and Rabbits Bill, though those, no doubt, had contributed to this result; but the encouragement to lawlessness and violence which he and his Friends had given in Ireland had had their bad effects in this country also.

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BROWNLOW): The Government have received a Report from the Chief Constable of Cheshire, from which it appears that these two police officers received very serious injuries while endeavouring to arrest a gang of men who were stealing geese on the night of November 5, 1887. The policemen appear to have displayed great courage and British pluck in the encounter which took place, and I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to their bravery. At the same time, I must point out that it is for the Court of Quarter Sessions, and not for the Government, to take such steps as they think proper to secure reward or compensation to members of the County Police Force, where, in the opinion of the Court, special gallantry has been displayed or serious injuries received in the discharge of their ordinary duties.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the mode of appointment, the duties, and the obligations of the high sheriffs of counties, and to report."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK) said, he had great pleasure in acceding to the Motion on the part of the Government.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Joint Committee with the Committee of the House of Commons appointed to examine into the present system of Private Bill legislation, and to report how far and in what manner, without prejudice to public interests, that system may be modified with a view to the interests of suitors, the economy of the time of Parliament, and the reduction of costs and charges: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

Lord Stanley of Alderley

E. Bathurst. L. Colville of Culross.
L. Balfour of Burley. L. Stalbridge.
L. Monk Bretton. L. Kensington.

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the Commons in the appointment of a chairman.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Abp. Canterbury. V. Gordon (*E. Aberdeen*).
E. Spencer. L. Balfour.
E. Milltown. L. Hopetoun (*E. Hopetoun*).
E. Onslow. L. Thring.
E. Strafford.
E. Kimberley.

The Committee to meet *To-morrow* at Three o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a *To-morrow*; and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*) (No. 49.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till *To-morrow*, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

MINUTES.—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Henry John Brinsley Manners, commonly called Marquess of Granby, for the County of Leicester (Eastern or Melton Division).

SELECT COMMITTEE—Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners); Mr. Cremer and Mr. Samuel Hoare *added*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—Customs, Isle of Man—*R.P.*

Ordered—First Reading—Secondary Education (Scotland) * [187]; Legal Proceedings (Reports) * [188]; Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, Amendment * [189].

Second Reading—Criminal Evidence * [132]; Statute Law Revision * [186]; Mortmain and Charitable Uses * [174]; Westminster Abbey * [165], *debate adjourned*.

Committee—Report—Army (Annual) * [179].
Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt (Conversion) * [164], and *passed*.

Withdrawn—Land Law (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment (Arrears of Rent) * [147]; Railway Regulation * [84].

QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL TOLLS ON GRAIN—CORPORATION OF GUILDFORD.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the President of the

Board of Trade, If it is a fact that the Corporation of Guildford levies a toll on all wheat and other grain, whether British grown or foreign, brought into the municipal market for sale; to what purposes the proceeds are devoted; if any complaint, by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers, has been received upon the subject; and, if there are any other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the United Kingdom, besides the Corporation of London, who, being duly empowered by law, levy a duty upon imports of grain into the locality under their jurisdiction for local purposes?

THE PRESIDENT (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): With regard to the first part of the Question, the Town Clerk of Guildford informs the Board of Trade that a toll is taken, not on all wheat and other grain brought into the market at Guildford, but only on all wheat sold in the market. This toll is one pint per sack; and the corn taken as toll is ultimately sold, and the proceeds paid into the Treasurer of the Borough to the credit of the Borough Fund—that is, the proceeds are devoted in aid of the borough rate. No complaint has, to the Town Clerk's knowledge, been made to the Corporation by either producers, middlemen, or local consumers on the subject of this toll. With regard to the latter part of the Question—namely, as to whether duties on grain brought into a particular locality are levied by other City, Borough, or Harbour Authorities in the country—the Board of Trade are aware that such duties are levied by some Harbour Authorities, and they believe they are levied by other City and Borough Authorities as regards articles brought into markets; but they have no official information in detail as to what is done by cities and boroughs. As the hon. Member is aware, a Royal Commission is now inquiring as to market rights and tolls.

BRITISH INDIA—ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY.

MR. SLAGG (Burnley) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will provide, for the use of hon. Members of this House, a map showing the additions that have been made to the territory of British India

since 1870, by annexation and otherwise; and providing references to the various Treaties, arrangements, and Proclamations under which those additions have been effected?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The only additions of any importance made to the territory of British India since 1870 are Upper Burmah and the districts on the North-Western Frontier. There may have been trifling rectifications of frontier elsewhere, by exchange with Native States, as to which no certain information could be given without reference to India. A map will be prepared and laid upon the Table showing the districts added last year on the North-Western Frontier, with the references asked for. But it is impossible to do the same thing in reference to Upper Burmah, as the frontier still remains to be marked out by the Commission agreed to in the Convention with China of 1886.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. WATERS, COUNTY COURT JUDGE OF WATERFORD, &c.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been drawn to the numerous instances in which the decisions of Mr. Waters, County Court Judge for the Counties of Waterford, Leitrim, and Cavan, in the exercise of the discretionary jurisdiction entrusted to Chairmen of Quarter Sessions by the Land Act of 1887, have been reversed by Mr. Justice Andrews at the County Cavan Spring Assizes; and, whether he has any power of providing for the consistent administration of justice?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: County Court Judges hold during good behaviour, and the Lord Chancellor has no jurisdiction to interfere with them in the exercise of their judicial discretion. All suitors dissatisfied with the decisions of a County Court Judge in Civil cases can appeal to the Judge of Assize, a right which appears to have been availed of in the instances referred to.

CHILDREN'S DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES ACT, 1879—EXHIBITION IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the public exhibitions of young children in acrobatic and other performances apparently dangerous to the life and limbs of children now taking place in the Metropolis, If it is the duty of the Metropolitan Police, or of the Metropolitan Board of Works, or of what other Public Authority, to take action, where necessary, under the provisions of "The Children's Dangerous Performances Act, 1879?"

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Statute referred to does not give the power, or impose the duty, of taking action upon the police or the Metropolitan Board of Works or any Public Authority. The Act leaves it open to any person, or Society, to initiate a prosecution in a proper case. I understand that there is a Society which has occasionally taken proceedings under this Act.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — FAIR RENTS—SUB-COMMISSION IN LONDONDERRY.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How soon a Sub-Commission will sit in the County of Londonderry to hear applications for a fair rent under the provisions of the Land Act of last year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that they have not fixed the date for the next sitting of a Sub-Commission in the County Londonderry.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES —MILLBANK PENITENTIARY.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, and when, it is intended to remove Millbank Penitentiary from its present site; and, whether, in the event of its removal, the Government will endeavour to give effect to the suggestion contained in the Report of

the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, that this site should be used for "workmen's dwellings and for open spaces connected therewith"?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; it is intended to discontinue the use of Millbank Penitentiary in the course of the present year. I can assure my hon. Friend that the Government will endeavour to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners on this head, so far as they can consistently with the provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — JOHN CLARKE AND WIFE, PRISONERS IN SLIGO GAOL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that John Clarke, of Cornakelly, County Longford, and his wife are at present undergoing a term of imprisonment in Sligo Gaol; when, and by whom, were they committed; what is their offence; and, how long are they to be kept in prison?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: It is the case that the prisoners referred to are in custody in Sligo Gaol. They were committed on the 23rd of August, 1887, by order of the Land Judges for re-taking forcible possession of their holding after they had been evicted by the Sheriff of Longford. They will be released at the expiration of 12 months from the date of their conviction, or on payment of the rent and costs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the order of committal prescribe their release on payment of the rent and costs?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot say.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat that portion of his answer which gave the payment of the rent and costs as a condition precedent to the release?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: They are committed for contempt of Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman repeat the latter part of his answer?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I stated that they would be released in 12 months, or on payment of the rent and costs due.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state what is the ransom which will procure their release?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; certainly not, without Notice.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—DEPUTY OFFICIAL RECEIVERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the fact that the powers to appoint Deputy Official Receivers are limited by "The Bankruptcy Act, 1883," to a period not exceeding two months, and that such appointments were intended to be temporary only, he will state for what period or periods a deputy, and who, has been appointed for the Official Receiver for Guildford; and, what steps are taken by the Board of Trade before they nominate a deputy to satisfy themselves that he is a fit person?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): There is at present no Deputy Official Receiver at Guildford; but the Board of Trade have, from time to time, appointed Mr. Britten, the Chief Clerk of the Official Receiver, to act as deputy during his temporary absence, as provided by the Bankruptcy Act. In no case has such appointment exceeded the period of two months specified by the Act. Before any such authority is granted the Board of Trade invariably require a Report upon the qualifications of the Official Receiver's nominee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COM- MISSION IN MONAGHAN.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When a Sub-Commission Court sat under the Land Act in Monaghan; whether he is aware that a large number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and that, although entitled to a reduced rent if decreed by the Court, they are being called upon to pay the full year's rent; and, if he will take steps to expedite the settlement of these cases?

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) also asked, when the Land Sub-Commission will sit in Clones, County Monaghan?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission sat in the County Monaghan during the months of October, November, and December last. No date has yet been fixed for the next sitting. It appears that on one estate in the county a number of tenants served originating notices before November last, and have been called upon to pay the full year's rent; but that, pending the decision of the Court, 20 per cent reduction is allowed to those who pay their rents within a specified time. As I stated in the House the day before yesterday, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the existing arrears in applications awaiting a hearing.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—THE BRISTOL CHANNEL.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether there is any intention of the Government to act upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1859, and of more than one Select Committee, to construct a Harbour of Refuge in the Bristol Channel; and, if so, when it will be commenced; what has been the loss of vessels and lives in the Bristol Channel since the Royal Commission recommended the construction of this Harbour of Refuge; and, whether it is a fact that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is at the present moment at least one-fifth part of the whole of England?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The matter to which the noble Lord refers is one in which, as one of the Members for Bristol, I am naturally much interested. I am sorry that I cannot give him the number of vessels lost in the Bristol Channel; but the number of lives lost by wrecks and casualties (excluding collisions and missing vessels) since 1859 is 1,314. The noble Lord is correct in supposing that the shipping trade of the Bristol Channel is about one-fifth part of that of the whole of England. As regards the intentions of the Government, I am

afraid, notwithstanding what I have stated, that I can only repeat that the Government have no intention of departing from the policy pursued by successive Governments in past years, under which they have hitherto declined to make grants of money for harbour construction except in cases of Imperial and National necessity.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL— SMALL ANNUITANTS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can include in the Conversion Scheme a clause by which annuitants of from £20 to £100 per annum shall be provided against any loss in their income, thereby preventing distress and embarrassment, by increasing their poverty, of widows, many with children to support, and other poor people wholly dependent upon small annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, if the hon. Member had followed the course of the Bill dealing with the Conversion of the National Debt, he would have seen that all that could be done had been done by enabling Trustees, with regard to these annuities, to vary the investment, and to invest in the proceeds of such Stock as was liable to conversion into Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, beyond which it was impossible to go.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—ADVANCES.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statement in *The Standard* of the 16th instant, to the effect—

"That of the £5,000,000 authorized by Lord Ashbourne's Act to be advanced to tenants for the purchase of their holdings, £4,500,000 had been applied for up to the end of February,"

is correct; and, if so, whether the Government intend, during the present Session, to introduce a Bill to promote the further operation of the said Act?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The amount applied for up to the end of February was £4,700,000; but that includes £390,000 which was re-

fused. The amount applied for and not refused is, therefore, something under the figure stated in the Question. Of this, however, only £3,680,000 has as yet been actually sanctioned; so that there remains considerably over £1,000,000 undisposed of. The Government are carefully considering the question as to the course which it may be best to pursue in these circumstances.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF MAILS TO THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster General, Why the Post Office pays £2,500 a-year for an acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith, where there is a limited population, and refuses to accelerate the same mail from Perth to the North, embracing a district of seven counties, containing a population of nearly 400,000 people?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The so-called acceleration of the down London day mail from Aberdeen to Keith consisted chiefly in the abolition of the interval of several hours which previously existed between the arrival of the mail train from the South at Aberdeen and the despatch Northward. The new arrangement, while effecting this object and providing for an earlier delivery of a large amount of correspondence, also secured a convenient through service for mails from Aberdeenshire to the North, *via* Inverness. The case of the down London day mail from Perth, on the Highland Railway, is very different. There is no undue detention at Perth to get rid of. The line from Perth to Thurso and Wick runs for several hundred miles through sparsely-populated districts with few towns of any considerable size except Inverness; and there is already expended on the conveyance of the mails, which includes two through mails a-day in each direction, so large a payment that no additional expense for the purpose of accelerating either service will be warranted.

POST OFFICE—UNIFORMS IN LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case that vests are supplied as part of Post Office uniform to first-class postmen in London, whilst

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vests, at one time supplied, are no longer supplied to first-class postmen in Edinburgh; if so, what is the reason for the discontinuance of that article of clothing in the case of Edinburgh; and, whether, if postmen can go without vests in Edinburgh, they cannot equally go without them in London?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Vests are supplied to the first-class town postmen in London. Vests have at no time been supplied to postmen in Edinburgh. Postmen in Edinburgh are supplied with a tunic which should always be worn buttoned; therefore, the necessity for a vest does not exist. Postmen in London are supplied with an open coat, for which a vest is needed; hence the difference between the two classes of uniform.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXTRA POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sergeant Noble, of the Quinn Police Barrack, County Clare, has been looking for the site of a police hut, wherein extra police are to be placed, within sight of the priest's residence; whether the regular County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one to every 280 of the population; whether this Force is sufficient to carry out the law; and, for what purpose is it proposed to quarter extra men in sight of the priest's house?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, I am informed that the sergeant referred to did look for a site for a police hut at a place which happens to be within view of the priest's residence; but that circumstance had nothing whatever to do with its selection. The nominal County Force consists of 549 men and nine officers, or about one man to every 257 of the population. The portion of the Force available for Quinn and its neighbourhood has recently been obliged to be frequently strengthened by sending extra police there to suppress illegal meetings; and to obviate the necessity and expense of sending these men the Divisional Magistrate has been considering the question of quartering a reserve force in the locality, which will be chargeable therewith.

MR. DILLON: Would the right hon. and gallant Gentleman inform the House, whether any illegal meetings have been held in that district; and, whether any crime or outrage has recently taken place in the district?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Illegal meetings have been held—or are reported to have been held—in the district.

MR. DILLON: Do I understand the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to say that because meetings have been reported to have been held extra police have been sent in? I would remind the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that he stated to me in this House, only a fortnight ago, that these reports would not be accepted as evidence that the meetings were held.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The evidence we have is statements that meetings have been held; and that meetings will be held, no matter whether extra police are brought in or not.

EGYPT—THE NEW EGYPTIAN LOAN.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to a statement in Sir Evelyn Baring's last Despatch to the Marquess of Salisbury, to the effect that the new Egyptian Loan was to be for £E5,000,000; and, whether this is true; and, if so, for what purposes the money is required?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The exact amount of the new Loan, as has been already stated, has not been positively settled, so far, at least, as Her Majesty's Government are aware. The chief objects are those already explained—namely, to carry out the arrangement made with the ex-Khedive and his family, which requires the liberation of lands pledged in security for the Domains Loan; and, secondly, to liberate lands similarly pledged to be granted to pensioners in commutation of their allowances. It will depend on the amount of the Loan how far the operation of converting pensions into grants of Domain Land is carried. As such conversions operate to the relief of the Egyptian Exchequer, the operation is, from a financial point of view, sound and desirable, provided the Loan can be effected on advantageous terms.

MR. DILLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what position the new Loan will hold with regard to the Privileged Unified Loan?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The new Loan must rank after the old one.

POST OFFICE—AUSTRALIAN AND CAPE LETTERS—OVERWEIGHT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Has his attention been called to the fact that, if any letter posted for Australia or the Cape of Good Hope happens to weigh a grain over half an ounce, the charge for postage is doubled—that is, from 6d. to 1s.; and, has he any intention to alter this Regulation, or consult with the Colonial Governments on the question?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is quite true that a letter exceeding the prescribed weight allowed for a single rate of postage is charged an additional postage rate. This Rule applies generally to letters for all parts of the world, and not alone to Australia and the Cape of Good Hope. Obviously, a limit of weight must be fixed in all cases; and I have no intention, as at present advised, of proposing any exception from the practice which has universally obtained with respect to this matter.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE GRANTHAM BOROUGH BENCH—HEAVY SENTENCE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) (for Mr. BROADHURST) (Nottingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a sentence of seven days' hard labour, passed by the Grantham Borough Bench upon an old man of 73 years of age, for the offence of going into a greengrocer's shop and bogging for an onion; and, if so, whether he can consider the advisability of mitigating this sentence?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the convicting magistrate on this case, from which it appears that this man has been well known to the police and to the magistrate personally for many years as a regular and persistent able-bodied beggar. I am told that he has for a

long time been a nuisance to passengers in the streets, to tradesmen, and especially to females. Frequent complaints of his conduct have been made to the police. He gave his age to the police as 67, and not 73. Under the circumstances, I cannot advise any interference with the sentence.

INDIA—THE IRRAWADDY FLOTILLA.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will consent to a Return showing the amounts paid during the past three years by the Government of India to the Irrawaddy Flotilla; and, in what respect, under what conditions, and for what services, such moneys have been paid?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State will consult the Government of India as to the expediency of having such a Return prepared. It would take some time, as the information would have to be procured from Burmah. The moneys are paid under contract with the Company for the conveyance of mails, troops, stores, prisoners, police, &c.

MR. BRADLAUGH inquired, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that great dissatisfaction was expressed in Burmah and India as to the amounts received by the Company?

SIR JOHN GORST: No; I cannot admit that fact.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—CONVICTIONS AT BALLINAMORE BRIDGE.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Messrs. Ferguson and Finlay, who were prosecuted at the late Petty Sessions at Ballinamore Bridge, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for speaking at a meeting held at Newbridge, and the latter gentleman convicted on the evidence of constables who took no notes at the meeting; whether a car driver who refused to carry police, not having been employed for the purpose, was prevented for some time from going home by Mr. Purcell, R.M., and his horse and car forcibly seized; under what statute Mr. Purcell acted in having

him detained; whether, in the disturbance which took place in consequence of the action of the police, several parties were arrested; whether the prisoners were assaulted by the police on their way to and while in the barrack in custody; whether Mr. Purcell refused substantial bail for the appearance of the prisoners, both on that occasion and after two subsequent remands; and, whether the prisoners will have been detained a month in custody before the date of the monthly Petty Sessions?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The prosecutions referred to were for speeches urging the people to enter into an unlawful conspiracy. Finlay was convicted on the evidence of the police, who had noted the proceedings immediately after the meeting at which he spoke. As regards the car driver, he had been employed by Mr. Beckett, one of the Resident Magistrates, to convey him between Ballinasloe and Ballinamore; but he refused to drive him back to Ballinasloe, as the Resident Magistrate wished to have a constable accompanying him. Mr. Beckett was, therefore, obliged to proceed by another car, along with the Sessional Crown Solicitor, who had conducted the prosecution. The demeanour of the car driver in question was offensive and defiant; and Mr. Purcell did not consider it advisable to allow him to follow immediately after the two gentlemen named, as his doing so would have led to a hostile demonstration and a breach of the peace, as at the time a great many people were about. Mr. Purcell accordingly detained him for about 15 minutes. He did so by virtue of his office as a magistrate, and to prevent a breach of the peace. A policeman who got upon the car was savagely attacked by a number of men with sticks and severely injured. Other members of the constabulary were struck with stones, and otherwise assaulted. For these assaults four men were arrested and remanded for a week to Galway Prison. There does not appear to be any ground for the allegation of an assault by the police. The attack upon the police was wanton and unprovoked. The Resident Magistrate did refuse bail. The prisoner's solicitor, in making application for a consent to bail on the

expiration of the first remand, stated in his letter that if the bail were refused the Queen's Bench would interfere; but he does not appear to have brought the matter before that Court. The prisoners will have been detained a month in custody, if not discharged before next Petty Sessions at Ballinamore.

MR. HAYDEN: Does the right hon. and gallant Gentleman deny that the prisoners were assaulted after arrest by the police in the barrack?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I have no information to the effect that they were. I know that the police were violently assaulted before.

NAVY—H.M.S. "HERO."

MR. LEATHAM BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Government is aware that iron girders have been placed under the engines of the *Hero* for the purpose of strengthening them; whether these girders have been placed in position by the responsible engineers of the Government; and who is to bear the expense of the alteration?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Some small additional strengthening brackets have been fitted to the engine bearers of the *Hero*. Being part of the hull structure, they were fitted in place by the Dockyard; and as all work on engine bearers, including these additions, is outside the engine contract, the expense is borne by the Admiralty.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—THE LAKE IN BATTERSEA PARK.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, Whether he is aware that the Lake in Battersea Park is in a foul and dangerous state, and contains 19 inches of silt and mud; and, whether it is the intention of the Metropolitan Board of Works to remedy the evil without delay?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the Metropolitan Board of Works was aware of the bad condition of the Lake; and measures would be immediately taken by the Board to clear away the deposit from the bottom of the Lake, and to restore the piece of Ornamental Water to a good condition.

TORQUAY HARBOUR AND DISTRICT ACT, 1886—THE SALVATION ARMY.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a statement, signed by 500 ratepayers of Torquay, as follows:—

"That we have known the Salvation Army to conduct marches with music through the streets of our town on Sundays and week days, ever since the commencement of their services here six years ago; that we did not know that it was proposed to insert in the Torquay Harbour and District Act, 1886, any clause prohibiting such marches, and that such clause only came to our knowledge after the passing of the Act; that it is not our wish that any member of the Salvation Army should be fined or imprisoned for taking part in such processions;"

and, whether he would be prepared to consider the advisability of a Standing Order relating to Private Bills which should require that any Bill containing Police Clauses should bear the word "Police" in its title?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a statement to the effect described in the Question. The hon. Member is, doubtless, aware that by Standing Order 173a Committees of this House are required to bring clauses of this kind to the notice of the House by specially reporting upon them; and by Standing Order 33a, passed last year at the instance of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), Bills proposing to create—

"Powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from or are repugnant to the general laws,"

have to be deposited at the Home Office. In the case of the Torquay Bill, 1886, the Home Office reported against the clause in question, on the ground that it was—

"A question for general legislation and should be struck out."

I do not see that the proposal of the hon. Member would add much to these existing safeguards; but if he will place on the Paper such a Standing Order as he suggests, I shall be glad to consult with the Authorities of the House as to the propriety of its passing.

THE LICENSING LAWS—CLUBS.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to

the proposals for diminishing the number of licensed public houses, it is the intention of the Government, during the present Session, to bring in a Bill dealing with Clubs in which intoxicating liquors are sold, with a view to diminishing their number, and placing them under the like restrictions and charges as public houses?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The question is how to deal with Bogus Clubs, of which complaint is so justly made, without unduly interfering with the *bona fide* Club. It is a very important question; but it is also one very difficult of solution. As my hon. and learned Friend knows, the Government has been considering the matter, and is still considering it; and I shall be very glad, indeed, if we can see any way of dealing with it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

BARON DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin) (for Mr. KENYON) (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the proposals made by the President of the Local Government Board, which may affect the position of the Metropolitan Board of Works, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to persevere with the appointment of a Royal Commission; and, whether any steps will be taken to limit the powers of the Board, *ad interim*, as regards their expenditure on sewerage experiments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; certainly. The Government were aware of these proposals when they assented to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the past working of the Board. The Government are not in possession of any information to justify their interference with the progress of any works now being undertaken by the Board.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would state the names of the Commissioners the Government proposed to appoint, and when the Bill would be introduced into the House; or, if he could not answer the Questions now, when would he be able to do so? He would remind the right hon. Gentle-

man that five weeks or more had elapsed since the promise of the Government was made.

MR. MATTHEWS: In answer to my noble Friend, I have to state that the Commissioners have been appointed. They are Lord Herschell, who presides over the Commission, a well-known and eminent Queen's Counsel; Mr. Bosanquet; and a Director of the Bank of England, Mr. Henry Grenfell. Instructions have been given for drafting the Bill to constitute the Commission, and it will be brought forward with as little delay as possible.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked, whether the inquiry respecting the Metropolitan Board of Works would be retrospective?

MR. MATTHEWS said, his recollection was that the Reference to the Commission was precisely in the terms of the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord Raulolph Churchill)—an inquiry "into the working" of the Metropolitan Board of Works. He understood that would include the whole of the working from the beginning; but he assumed the Commissioners would exercise some discretion as to the manner in which they would conduct the inquiry.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE OVER SENEGAL, &c.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government can communicate any information relative to the Protectorate, which it is reported the French Governor of Senegal has established, and also relative to the rule which he is endeavouring to administer over a part of the Gambia Territories, which for many years have formed part of the British Dependencies on the West Coast of Africa; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government is taking to obtain the withdrawal of French troops and the restoration of British influence in these territories?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The French have not formally declared any Protectorate in the manner stated in the Question, but have lately advanced into territories bordering on the River Gambia. They have, however, checked their progress in deference

to representations from Her Majesty's Government, with a view to friendly discussion of the question of boundaries and of spheres of influence.

LAW AND POLICE — ASSAULTS ON CHILDREN — SENTENCE ON ANN GUTHRIE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Ann Guthrie, charged before the magistrates at the City Police Court, at Liverpool, on Friday last, with assaulting Mary Conroy, aged 13 years; whether it was proved that Guthrie, after repeated assaults, had finally broken the child's arm by kicking; whether the magistrates informed Guthrie that she was liable to six months' imprisonment, but afterwards permitted her to leave the Court on paying a compensation of £5; and, whether he will take steps to secure the better protection of children from savage assaults resulting in serious physical injuries, by insuring that those guilty of such assaults shall be adequately punished?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Justices on this case, who inform me that, although the woman had struck the child repeatedly with a boot, it was not proved to their satisfaction that the child's arm had been broken by kicking. A lodger in defendant's house stated that he had not on any previous occasion known the woman to ill-use the child, who appeared to be habitually well treated. The defendant expressed regret that she had lost her temper on the occasion in question. It is true that the defendant was informed by the magistrates that she had rendered herself liable to six months' imprisonment; but as the injury seemed to them one for which the girl ought to receive compensation, and as in case of conviction she would be debarred from enforcing any such claim, they deemed it best in her interest to allow the summons to be withdrawn on payment of £5 (to be invested in the girl's name in the Post Office Savings Bank) and £1 1s. costs. The hon. Member is aware that I cannot increase the punishment imposed by magistrates in the exercise of the discretion which the law allows them.

MR. CHANNING said, the medical testimony was to the effect that the child's arm was fractured. Would the Home Secretary take steps to prevent such cases being settled by compensation?

MR. MATTHEWS replied, that the information he had received as to the medical testimony was directly contrary to that of the hon. Member.

ROYALTIES—COAL AND OTHER MINERALS.

MR. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the estimated amount of royalties paid on the output on coal, ironstone, and other minerals in the United Kingdom; and, what portion, if any, of those royalties contribute towards local taxation?

THE SECRETARY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, he was unable to give the Return asked for by the hon. Gentleman. The Income Tax Returns did not show the amount paid for royalties; and the Local Government Board, to whom he had applied, had no information on the subject.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, if the hon. Gentleman was aware that a single owner, in a single county, drew £140,000 a-year from royalties, and another £40,000 from wayleave rents, without contributing one farthing to local taxation?

MR. JACKSON said, he had no information on the matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the facts he had referred to were not disclosed in a Return which had been presented to that House?

[No reply.]

LONDON COAL AND WINE DUES CONTINUANCE BILL.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the hon. Baronet the Senior Member for the City of London, Whether, after the statement of the President of the Local Government Board last night as to the constitution of a new Metropolitan Authority, it is the intention of the Corporation of London to proceed with the Coal and Wine Dues Continuance Bill?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) (who replied) said, it was the intention of the Corporation and the Metropolitan Board of Works, the promoters of the Bill, to proceed with it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) — PAYMENTS TO ROAD CONTRACTORS, TIPPERARY, N.R.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the moneys earned by the road contractors in the North Riding of the County of Tipperary for a period of eight months came due at the recent Assizes at Nenagh on the 5th and 6th instants, when, as usual, cheques for payment should be issued; whether these contractors, numbering over 500, mostly poor men, are yet unpaid; whether many of them reside at a distance of 20 miles from Nenagh, where they have had to come applying for their money; and, whether complaints have reached him that this is owing to the neglect of "the Clerk of the Crown and Peace" in not signing the cheques duly certified for; and, if so, whether he will have instructions issued to that official to have the payments made without further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Clerk of the Crown and Peace reports that a few days must necessarily elapse after the Assizes are over before payments can be made to contractors. When the presentments are filed by the Judge of Assize, the Secretary to the Grand Jury has to prepare a draft in favour of each contractor, which is then submitted to the Clerk of the Crown and Peace, who has to examine it carefully with the original presentment before he countersigns it. The presentments are very numerous, and necessarily require some days for examination. He does not believe there is a single contractor still unpaid. In the case of those who came to him, even before the Assizes had closed, and represented that they lived at a distance, he at once, at great personal inconvenience, examined and countersigned the drafts; and the next day, before leaving to attend the Clonmel Assizes, he signed as many drafts as were then ready. He, however, cannot undertake in future to have all the drafts ready until about one week after the Assizes are over, which appears to be also the practice in other counties; and of this the contractors have been already fully informed.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN asked the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, is it not the invariable practice that payment should be made before the expiration of Assizes; and, also, whether, under any circumstances, compensation will be made to those poor men for their loss of time and the expense that they have incurred in journeying several times to and from the Assize Court, sometimes a distance of more than 20 miles?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: So far as I can understand, an irregular and objectionable practice has prevailed in the North Riding of Tipperary—that of contractors coming and asking for payment even before the presentments have been fiated. That appears to be a very irregular proceeding, and the present Clerk of the Crown has very properly laid down another rule.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has not answered the Question. I asked him, does he say that it was not the invariable practice to have the payments made beforehand?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I should say it was not. I do not think it possible it could have been. What I am informed is that that practice had prevailed. I suppose it began by obliging one or two contractors, and then came to be an abuse and could not be continued.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, whether it is not a fact that the fiating of these presentments is not the first duty that a Judge performs at the Assize?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Yes, Sir. These presentments are passed by the Grand Jury and then fiated by the learned Judge. But they have then to go through the hands of the Secretary to the Grand Jury, who has other multifarious duties to attend to, and they are then carefully revised and gone through by the Clerk of the Crown. As I have already explained, it is manifestly impossible to have all these duties performed in a short time.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL —SMALL HOLDERS.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the Postmaster General, Whether any information will be circulated by the Post Office to the holders of small

amounts of Government Securities with reference to the conversion; and, whether instructions have been given to secure the full and effective publication of this information, by notices exhibited at the Post Offices and otherwise?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A Memorandum giving full information on the subject has been printed by my direction, and this will be exhibited at all Post Offices, and copies will be supplied to Postmasters, &c., for distribution.

CHINA (INLAND NAVIGATION)—THE YANGTZE KIANG.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) (for Sir RICHARD TEMPLE) (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state the latest result of the communications between the British Representatives and the Chinese Authorities on the Yangtze Kiang regarding the upward passage of the British steamer now lying near the rapids of that River?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The latest information received on this subject from Her Majesty's Minister in China is dated the 19th instant, to the effect that in the early part of last month the Yâmen had caused a Proclamation to be issued by the Authorities at Tchang, warning the public that a steamer would start on the journey to Ching King, on the Upper Yangtze River; that the steamer had a right to do so; that native interests would not suffer thereby; and that any attempt at interference would be severely punished.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—APPLICA- TIONS FOR "FAIR RENTS."

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the list of fair rent cases to be heard at Banbridge on the 4th of April next does not include any of the applications made immediately before the 1st of November last by tenants on the estates of Baron Trevor and the other large landed proprietors in the County of Down; whether he can state why, contrary to precedent, the Banbridge

list includes a large number of applications from Downpatrick Union, and why no special list was published for Downpatrick; and, if he can say at what dates sittings of a Sub-Commission will be held to hear the fair rent applications of the leaseholders and present tenants from the Unions of Banbridge and Downpatrick who are entitled to the benefit of the reduction in respect of the half-year's rent due at 1st November last?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners are at present on Circuit in the County Clare, and they are unable to furnish the required information until Saturday next.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885
—THE TENANTS OF THE MARQUESS
OF LONDONDERRY, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the two Circulars recently sent to the County Down tenants of the Lord Lieutenant, signed by His Excellency's land agent, Mr. Brownlow, in which the Marquess of Londonderry holds out strong inducements to the tenants to purchase their holdings, and declares his inability to continue to give to his tenants the reduction—

"Which he has granted the last two years, and by giving which he has received absolutely nothing from his own property ;"

whether he is aware that owing to charges on the Londonderry estates created by the late Marquess of Londonderry, and not on account of any default on the part of the tenants, or by reason of any benefits given to them by the landlord, this inability to accept a reduced rent arises; and, whether, considering that according to present arrangements none of the fair rent applications made by the tenants of the Marquess of Londonderry are to be listed for hearing at the first sitting of the County Down Sub-Commission at Newtownards in May next, and considering that nearly 4,000 applications from County Down still remain unheard, he will now take steps to have an additional Sub-Commission appointed for that county?

Mr. M'Cartan

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: My attention has been called to the Circulars in question through the hon. Member who puts this Question sending them to me. I have no knowledge as to whether the inability to accept a reduced rent arises from charges on the estate created by the late owner or otherwise. As has been stated, the Government are anxiously considering the steps to be taken to deal with the arrears of business in the Land Commission.

CRIMINAL LAW — CONVICTION OF
JOHN RUSSELL AT BIRMINGHAM
ASSIZES.

SIR JOHN COMMEREILL (Southampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to the report of the trial at Birmingham Assizes of John Russell, aged 60, alias Cooper and "Australian Jemmy," who was sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for burglariously entering the house of Dr. Robins, surgeon, Grantham Road, Birmingham, when Mr. Justice Smith, in passing sentence, said the prisoner had been twice sentenced to transportation for life, and also to 10 years' penal servitude for burglary with violence; and, since after two life sentences he has been set at liberty, when under the present system this offender will be again at large?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This convict's career is remarkable. In 1850 he was sentenced to transportation for life for burglary. This sentence was reduced to one of 10 years by the Secretary of State in 1853, at the end of which time he was pardoned. In 1861 he was again sentenced to transportation for life for wounding with intent; but he seems to have escaped from Australia by some means or other, for in 1875 he was sentenced in this country to 10 years' penal servitude for sacrilege. He served the whole of this sentence, and he is now again under a sentence of 15 years. In the ordinary course, if he behaves well, he will be due for release in 11 years five months, unless, possibly, the life sentence were to be enforced.

INLAND REVENUE—EXCISE LICENCES

—THE EMPIRE THEATRE, LEICESTER SQUARE.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Excise Authorities are aware that wines, spirits, and beer are nightly sold by retail at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, London, no magistrates' licence having been granted for the sale of excisable articles upon such premises; why the persons concerned in such sales have not been proceeded against by the Excise Authorities; and, whether it is the intention of the Authorities to institute proceedings?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Commissioners of Inland Revenue are aware that intoxicating liquors are sold by retail at the Empire Theatre. After the theatre had been licensed by the Justices as a place of public entertainment, an application was made to the Commissioners to issue an Excise licence for the sale of liquors there under Section 7 of the Act 5 & 6 Will. IV. c. 39; but the Commissioners were advised that since the passing of the Licensing Act of 1872, they had ceased to have the power to issue a licence in England under that section for any place except a theatre. The point, however, is not free from doubt; and a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel the Commissioners to issue the licence was granted by the Court of Queen's Bench on the 13th of December last. Upon service of this Rule the Commissioners felt they were not justified in objecting to the sale of liquors, or in taking any steps which might have the effect of postponing the opening of the house, and throwing a large number of persons out of employment. They, therefore, accepted a deposit of the amount of duty which would be payable on the licence, pending the argument of the Rule. It is expected that the Rule will come on for argument in the course of next month.

DR. CLARK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that last year an application was made to the magistrates for a licence, which was refused, and that power was only given to the Commissioners to grant a special licence of three days, and that those

three days had been going on ever since Christmas of last year?

MR. GOSCHEN: The Commissioners have not granted a licence, but a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel them to do so has been granted; and it is in consequence of that that the sale of intoxicating liquors at the theatre has been permitted. If the Commissioners are held to have been right in refusing the licence, of course the sale will be stopped.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL
—REDEMPTION OF UNCONVERTED STOCKS.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in order that holders of Consols and Reduced Stock may know exactly what is the alternative to immediate conversion of their Stocks into new Stock, he will state whether a year's notice will be given immediately after the 11th May of the redemption of all or any unconverted Stocks; and, if not, when it will be given; and, is another Act of Parliament necessary to enable the notice to be given, or to redeem the Stocks not now converted; and, if so, whether he proposes to introduce the Bill during this Session?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am unable to state at present when or where this notice will be given. I shall not be able to make such a statement until the result of the conversion of the New Threes is practically known and decided. Another Act of Parliament is not necessary to give the notice, but a Resolution of the House would be necessary; and I hope, within a short time, to be able to state whether I shall propose to the House to pass that Resolution or not.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether any Act of Parliament is necessary to redeem the Stock.

MR. GOSCHEN: A Resolution of notice for paying off the Stock by instalments is sufficient for the purpose; but if larger measures were proposed, it might be necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to direct the mode and manner in which the payment should be made.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

SIR JOHN DORINGTON (Gloucester, Tewkesbury) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could lay upon the Table before the Easter Recess a Paper showing the probable number of members of the County Councils for each of the counties in England and Wales under the new Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir; it will be impossible for us to lay this on the Table before Easter. It is a matter which necessitates much investigation. I will, however, undertake to lay it on the Table before the Bill leaves Committee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE EDENDERRY UNION.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he can arrange for the Land Commissioners to hear the large number of cases in the Edenderry Union, and so relieve the tenants from the hardships of further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: A Sub-Commission will sit next month for that portion of the Edenderry Union which is in the County Meath. No sitting has yet been fixed for the other portions of the Union.

DR. FOX: Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that nearly four years have elapsed since a sitting has been held in the King's County Division, or know that there are several hundred cases to be disposed of?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: If the hon. Gentleman will put a Notice on the Paper I will make inquiries.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): This is a matter of very great importance. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has stated several times that the Government were giving their most anxious consideration to this vital question. ["Order, order!"] If necessary, I will move the adjournment of the House, in order to call attention to the question as a matter of urgent public im-

portance. I wish to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman if he can give us any idea, as it is four years since the Sub-Commissioners sat in Edenderry Union, when his anxious consideration and the anxious consideration of the Government is supposed to begin, and when it is likely to come to a conclusion?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I should be exceedingly surprised if I discovered that it was four years, or anything approaching four years, since the Sub-Commissioners sat in the King's County Division of the Edenderry Union.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): It is now four weeks ago since the right hon. and gallant Gentleman told me that the Government were anxiously considering whether they should increase the number of Sub-Commissioners. I wish to know whether the Government are not only going to take the question into consideration, but are going to keep it there?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, as the Head of Her Majesty's Government, for an answer in reference to this important question, the delay in reference to which, he must be aware, is causing a number of tenants to be turned into caretakers. When will Her Majesty's Government be able to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners to deal with the glut of Land Commissioners' work which now prevails in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): This matter has received, and is receiving, the very serious consideration of the Government, who are desirous of dealing with the question at the earliest possible moment. But it is one which requires very careful consideration. [An hon. MEMBER: Ten years.] Having regard to the fact that the Land Commission itself is on the point of expiring, there will be no delay whatever in dealing with the matter.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS AND COTTARS IN ELGIN, &c.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Will the Government agree to a Return of the number of Crofters and Cottars in the Counties of Elgin, Nairn, Banff, Aberdeen, Perth, and Stirling?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): As I have repeatedly stated in this House, the expressions "crofter" and "cottar" do not convey the same meaning in different parts of Scotland. Such a Return as the hon. Member proposes would, therefore, be misleading. Besides, there is no machinery for taking such a Return, and the Government, therefore, cannot assent to it.

MR. ANDERSON asked, whether the words did not convey the same meaning in the Counties of Elgin and Nairn, Banff and Aberdeen.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he could not name the counties; but it was undoubtedly the case that the words had not the same meaning in all the counties referred to in the Question.

IRELAND—THE ENGLISH DEPUTATION.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an English deputation who recently visited Ireland were watched and followed from place to place by policemen and detectives; if so, whether such a course was taken at the request of Her Majesty's Government; whether any Reports were made to the Government; and, whether such Reports will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: If the hon. Member is so good as to mention the English deputation to which he refers, I shall be glad to give him the information.

ORDER (METROPOLIS)—THE SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will state the total cost incurred in consequence of the recent swearing-in of special constables within the Metropolitan District; and, whether he will lay upon the Table an account of the items of expenditure?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) in reply, said, the total cost incurred was a frac-

tion over £1,500, of which £1,033 odd were for truncheons and badges, and somewhat under £100 for rent and lighting of offices, and miscellaneous expenses made up the balance. He did not think any useful purpose would be served by laying the accounts on the Table.

LAW AND JUSTICE—DELAYS IN THE CITY OF LONDON COURT.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to a Petition, recently presented to the Lord Chancellor, in reference to delays in the conduct of business in the City of London Court; and, whether he is able to say whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): My attention has been called to the Petition referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. It is certainly signed by gentlemen who have great experience with reference to business in the City of London Court. The matter is under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor, and I will see that the attention of the City Authorities is also called to the Petition.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—MEMBERS' PLACES.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the inconvenience at present existing with regard to Members serving on Select Committees who wish to secure places in the House; and, whether he will give facilities for the discussion of the new Rule of Procedure on that subject standing in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hereford (Sir Joseph Bailey), and the Amendment thereto by the hon. Member for North Essex.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (in reply) said, he was aware that hon. Gentlemen serving on Select Committees were exposed to considerable inconvenience in regard to the seats they desired to occupy in the House. He thought the question was one which deserved consideration. He hoped the Motion of the hon. Member for Hereford would be reached in time. Any assistance he

could give in the solution of the difficulty would be heartily given.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any general official objection, pending the decision of the Royal Commission on Civil Service Departments, to any Civil Servant in this country being a member of the "Irish National League of Great Britain;" and, whether the question is left by the Treasury to be separately decided by the Heads of the several Departments?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No circumstances have as yet come to my knowledge which would require special Regulations to be issued as to Civil Servants joining the National League of Great Britain. As I have before stated, much must be left to the discretion of Civil Servants themselves; and, while we strongly deprecate overt acts indicating violent partizanship, we are unwilling to attempt too vigorously to define the precise limits within which the political opinion of Civil servants may legitimately find expression.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would say specifically whether it was left to the discretion of the Heads of different Departments to decide whether A might belong to the Primrose League and that B could not belong to the National League of Great Britain?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think that any such authority exists with the Heads of Departments as that which is suggested by the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

Subsequently,

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that as he had not been able to obtain a clear idea of the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman another Question. It was this—whether those Members of the Civil Service of Great Britain, many in number, who belonged to the National League, were by so belonging infringing any Rule which exists in the Civil Service generally; and, whether they are to look to the Treasury for legality for their position, or look to the Heads of their several Departments?

Mr. W. H. Smith

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was sorry he could not add anything to the answer given to the hon. Member.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have not given him Notice, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to initiate legislation to carry out the Resolution on the subject of Irish Arrears passed by this House yesterday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No. There is no present intention on the part of the Government to do so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to an Order which stands in his name for the appointment of an additional Judge to the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, Whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with it to-night?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Yes; unless there is a strong objection to its being proceeded with. It was represented that there was urgent necessity for additional strength.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Am I wrong in supposing that this is the first notice which the House has had of the intention of the Government in the matter? The House, up to the present time, has had no information as to the intention of the Government to appoint an additional Judge, imposing a further burden of £5,000 a-year.

MR. W. H. SMITH replied that the Notice was put on the Paper on Tuesday last. Undoubtedly, there would be an additional charge on the Consolidated Fund.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman wish the House to decide absolutely to-night as to this additional appointment?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I stated that I would not press the matter if there was any strong objection.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

In reply to Mr. FIRTH (Dundee),

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he apprehended that the Royal Commission of Inquiry with reference to the Metropolitan Board of Works would retrospectively include everything from the foundation of the Board.

MR. DILLON AND SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol a Question in reference to a speech which he is reported to have made in the East of London last night. He is reported to have used these words—

“Our opponents may be loyal subjects of the Queen, but it is difficult for us to understand how that loyalty is compatible with intimate association with men who—as I myself heard the other night in the House of Commons—make it a grievance that Her Majesty’s soldiers should beguile a tedious march by singing ‘God save the Queen.’”

I wish, in the first place, to ask whether that is a correct report of his speech?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir.

MR. DILLON: Under those circumstances, I must claim the right to address a personal explanation to the House, as I presume the charge is levelled against myself.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH assented.

MR. DILLON: I regret to be obliged, Sir, to say that I consider it to be a very gross misrepresentation. I wish to direct the attention of the House to what the nature of the charge is. It is perfectly specific. It charges me with having made it a matter of grievance that the soldiers of the Queen should beguile a tedious march by singing “God save the Queen.” What are the circumstances of which I complain? To begin with, there was no tedious march. The soldiers of the Queen were brought into Ennis on the occasion of a Nationalist demonstration of a very advanced character. Into the merits of the demonstration it is not necessary for me to

enter. They were brought to the town for the purpose of maintaining the peace of the town if the peace was disturbed; and as usual, upon such occasions, they were confined to the barracks while the demonstration was going on. I now come to what I complain of. The soldiers, instead of being confined to the barrack until the crowds had dispersed after the demonstration was over (as is usual on occasions of the kind) were marched out of the barracks while the streets were thronged by thousands of persons who were returning from the demonstration. They were marched against these thronging thousands, at the imminent danger of a collision; and while the marching was going on they sang “God save the Queen” and “Rule Britannia,” and they were headed by the Resident Magistrate, who might have to sit on the Bench as Judge afterwards, who is I am informed, specially appointed to sit and adjudicate in the district. I leave it to this House, and think it is eminently a case for personal explanation, as to whether it is right for a right hon. Gentleman to so outrageously misrepresent the action of a fellow Member of this House for political purposes, and I shall merely conclude by placing the two statements side by side. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol is that I complained of Her Majesty’s soldiers beguiling a weary march by singing “God save the Queen.” Well, I complain of four or five things, which I shall now repeat—There was no weary march in the question at all. I complain of the soldiers being turned out of the barracks before the crowd had left the town, which they were doing peaceably. I complain of those soldiers being marched through an excited crowd when there was not a shadow of disturbance, and when they ought to have been kept in barracks; and I complain of their singing songs on that march, a course which was never pursued by soldiers in that district before, although they have been frequently brought in for a similar purpose; and, finally, I complain that a man who might be, if any riot occurred, sitting on the Bench, returning at the head of those soldiers, in the face of the people, singing “Rule Britannia.” It is not a question of whether it is a right or wrong. The question is whether the

right hon. Gentleman stated what was true or not; and I have now told you what I complained of, and I leave it to the House to judge whether or not that was a fair and honest representation.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I will simply say that the hon. Member has not had the courtesy to give me private Notice of his intention to bring this matter forward, and therefore I have not been able to refer to the answer given by my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) to the Question asked by the hon. Member the other night. I am, like the hon. Member, quite content to leave the matter to the judgment of the House—who know what the Question and Answer were. It is my impression that the effect of the Question and Answer is precisely what I represented.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) —
SALARIES OF DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, To inform the House when the Government proposed to introduce the Bill to legalize the payment of salaries to Divisional Magistrates in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It will depend very much on the course of Public Business; but I hope the Bill will be brought in shortly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

(Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson.)

[BILL 164.] THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read (*Queen's Consent*, and *Prince of Wales' Consent* as Duke of Cornwall, *signified*).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

Mr. DODDS (Stockton) said, that his attention had been called that morning to the provision contained in Clause 5 as to the difficulty which would arise owing to the shortness of time allowed

Mr. Dillon

to trustees under the Bill for procuring the assent of their *cestui que* trusts. It must be remembered that trustees were under the necessity of procuring the assent of all persons interested in the trust fund, and a great number of them might, at this season of the year, be in different parts of the world, so that their assent could not be procured in the course of a few days. Then, again, when the assent of the Judge was required before a trustee could act, the difficulty was almost greater. He assumed that it was intended to obtain the Royal Assent to the Bill on Tuesday next. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that on the same day the Courts would rise for the Easter Vacation, and not sit again till the 12th of April. In many cases, he apprehended that the Vacation Judge would hardly be the proper person to consider applications of this kind. Where the estate was being administered in the Court of Chancery, he apprehended that it would be necessary to apply to the Judge to whose Court the particular estate was attached. There was no chance of the application being made before the 1st of April, and if all these cases were to be left to the Vacation Judge, it was simply impossible for him to consider the numerous cases that would be brought before him. Under those circumstances, and expressing his regret that he had not been able to direct attention to the point earlier, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able, if not in that House, in "another place" to grant some extension of time within which trustees might signify their assent to the scheme, or failing to do so, be bound by the provisions of the Act. The question was one of vital importance to trustees generally, and for their sake he thought there ought to be some extension of time before this provision became law.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he rose to move the re-committal of the Bill, with a view to insert the following new Clause relating to the reinvestment of trust funds:—

"Any trust funds now invested in New Three Pounds per Cent Stock, Consolidated Three Pounds per Cent Stock, or Reduced Three Pounds per Cent Stock may, instead of being converted under this Act, unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust, be reinvested by the trustees thereof in the purchase of—

- "(1.) Debenture stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament ;
- "(2.) Preference guaranteed lien annuity or rent-charge stock, the dividend on which is not contingent on the profits of the year of such Railway Companies in Great Britain as have paid a dividend on their ordinary stock for ten years immediately preceding the date of investment ;
- "(3.) Stock or annuities issued by any Municipal Corporation of Great Britain, which annuities or the interest or dividend upon which stock are secured upon rates or taxes levied by such Municipal Corporation under the authority of any Act of Parliament ;
- "(4.) Stocks or other public funds of the government of any colony of the United Kingdom approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, and also bonds or documents of debt of any such government approved as aforesaid, provided such stocks, bonds, or others are not payable to bearer."

He wished to call the attention of the House shortly to a somewhat important point in regard to which he asked to extend the power of investment. Only yesterday the Government had assented to an extension in this direction by providing that trust funds might be invested as certain funds under the control of the Court of Chancery were allowed to be invested. There was a general feeling that a further privilege should be extended to trust funds dealt with by the Bill. He, therefore, asked the House to re-commit the Bill for the purpose of introducing a clause extending the power of investment to the Debenture Stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament, which had paid a dividend on their ordinary Stock for 10 years immediately preceding the date of investment ; upon the Stock or annuities issued by municipal corporations and colonial Stocks or other public funds approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice. He would point out that the concession made yesterday was really a very small extension. The Court of Chancery allowed trustees to invest, besides the ordinary Three per Cent Government Stock, in India Four per Cents, in Metropolitan Board of Works Stocks, and on mortgage on real securities. With regard to real securities, the extension of the power of trustees in regard to investment was very trifling, because, in consequence of the depression in the value of land, no trustee was likely

to invest funds under his control in real property. Therefore real securities must be put aside as an investment. Then, with regard to India Four per Cents he believed there was a sum of £50,000,000 or £60,000,000 in which trustees could invest. He now asked the House to accept his proposition, because a precedent had already been established for it some years ago. What he asked the Government to do in this case was already the law in Scotland in reference to trust funds. In the year 1884, an Act was passed providing for the investment of trust funds in Scotland which gave to trustees in Scotland the identical power for which he now asked. He did not think the House would say the Scotch people were not prudent in the matter of investment, and if they were contented to have a power of this kind, and to use it constantly, it was quite evident that it had been found to work effectually. Therefore, there would be no danger in introducing the same provision with regard to trust funds in this country. All that he asked was that the power already given to trustees should be extended to other classes of security—such as Preference and Debenture Stocks of Railway Companies. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to them in introducing the Bill as having increased very much in value, and no one could doubt that they were a first-class security. He only asked that such Preferential Stocks should be available as had paid a dividend on their Ordinary Stock for 10 years preceding the date of investment. In the first place, he asked for the inclusion of the Corporation Stocks of the various municipal towns in the Kingdom. He thought it would be conceded that these were as safe an investment as the Metropolitan Board of Works Stock. That was an investment already approved of by the Court of Chancery. He would ask the House how it could be said that the Corporation Stocks of the various towns of the country and the equally valuable Stock created by the Metropolitan Board of Works were not ample security for the investment of trust funds? Everybody knew that the Corporation Stocks of such towns as Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester were a most valuable security, and he asked why the principle which had

already been adopted in regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works should not be extended to the Stocks of these various Corporations? In the next place, he proposed colonial securities as another branch of investment which had operated well in Scotland. Trustees at present might invest in one branch of Colonial Stock—namely, the India Four per Cents, and he failed to see why they should not be able to invest in the New South Wales Three-and-a-Half per Cents, as well as in the India Four per Cents. Nevertheless, trustees were permitted to invest trust funds in Indian Stock, while they were not permitted to invest in the Stock of New South Wales and other Colonies. The clause he had drawn up contained a provision that the Court of Chancery should make an order as to which of the Colonial Stocks trust funds might be invested in. He thought the proposal was a very reasonable one, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would thoroughly understand that he had no desire to interfere with the success of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, nor did he believe that his present proposal would militate in any way against it. He did not think that it would affect the financial scheme of the right hon. Gentleman in any degree whatever; but inasmuch as the scheme would have the effect of necessarily cutting down small incomes, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to open the door to other securities, by means of which trustees would be enabled to get a dividend equivalent to 3 per cent. If that were not done, and it was not suggested that they would affect the success of the financial scheme, the impression would get abroad that the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to convert the Government Stocks into Consols, and to compel trustees to invest in them. Under these circumstances, he asked the House to allow the Bill to be re-committed for the purpose of introducing the clause of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of a New Clause."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (*Mr. Goschen*) (*St. George's,*

Mr. Anderson

Hanover Square) said, he regretted that the Government could not accept the proposal of the hon. and learned Member. It appeared to him that the hon. and learned Member desired to substitute, for the Consols in which parents and testators had desired to invest, a variety of other securities, although it was the evident intention of such testators to bind up their money tightly in Government securities and not allow them to be invested either in Colonial Bonds, or any other securities. The Government had gone as far as it could by providing yesterday that a certain limited amount of Stock sanctioned by the Court of Chancery might take the place of Consols, and every person who chose could, by re-investment in those funds, get 3 per cent, because the Stocks in question would give them 3 per cent. But the hon. and learned Member went beyond that, and proposed to include Stocks which gave more than 3 per cent, and also gave power to Trustees to choose their investments. Whether that was a right or wrong principle, it ought to be looked at apart from the present Bill; and the question whether the investments authorized by the Court of Chancery ought to be widened or not could not come within the scope of that measure. He would illustrate that point. The hon. and learned Member seemed to suggest that the Court of Chancery should determine what kind of Colonial Stock might be bought in place of Preference Stock. He could hardly imagine the Court of Chancery sitting down to inquire into the condition of the Colonies in order to decide which of the Colonial Stocks should be sanctioned and which should not. There would probably be a jealousy on the part of the Colonies that were left out. Again, there were such cases as extravagant Colonies piling up debt very fast; and he did not think that the House would desire to substitute any cases where the testator or the parent deliberately wished to leave tied up in Government securities investments of the class included in the proposals of the hon. and learned Member. The Government had gone as far as they thought the case allowed. They had admitted such securities as had been sanctioned hitherto; but they could not, by an incidental clause in the Bill, re-open or sanction a principle of far wider applica-

tion—namely, that of putting Colonial and other Stocks precisely in the same position as the Stocks of this country. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), he thought the hon. Member had not noticed Sub-section 3 of Clause 9, which provided that investment in various Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should not be deemed a change of investment. He would engage himself as far as this—in any exceptional case where there was a difficulty in obtaining the sanction of all the Trustees, no attempt would be made to take any advantage of any delay, official or otherwise, on the part of any owner so as to exclude him from the benefits of the Act. The Bill, however, had been varied, and he thought the hon. Member would find that his objection had disappeared.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he could not understand why the Government declined to accept the suggestion that securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should be available for the investment of Trust Funds. He felt the force of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the proposition to invest in a variety of securities; and perhaps it would not be right to allow a Trustee to select the kind of security in which he would invest. But he was not asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do anything of a speculative or experimental nature; but to follow legislation which had already been sanctioned by the House. He failed to see why the Government could not, consistently with what they did yesterday, extend slightly the clause of the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Cozens-Hardy). When the Settled Lands Act was passed in 1882 a course was taken which he thought might with justice be followed now, seeing that it affected the matter they were now discussing. It was determined by that Act that on land being sold the money might be invested on Government securities, or on other securities which the Act described. By that Act the Legislature allowed the money of a testator to be invested in land, and set forth what was to be done with the profits derived from such land. Among the securities sanctioned was the purchase of the Stock of any Railway Company

which had for 10 years before the date of investment paid a dividend on its ordinary stock and shares. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) asked the House to continue in this instance what was, in reality, a perfectly safe piece of legislation; and the reason they were asked to do so was that the step taken by the Government would not secure 3 per cent from investments in Consols. He would remind the Government that they were not really asked to interfere with any principle beyond that which was interfered with yesterday. They were only asked to extend the clause, so as to enable the interest upon invested Trust Funds to be increased from 2½ to 3 per cent, but no investment would be allowed to take place except with the sanction of the Court of Chancery. The Debenture Stock of a Railway Company which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock and shares for 10 years must be a safe investment. He did not approach the question in any spirit of hostility towards the Government; nor did he know whether it would be better to make an appeal to the Government in "another place," or to take the matter in hand now. He would advise his hon. and learned Friend not to press the Government now; but to give them an opportunity of considering the matter. But if that course was not taken, and the Motion was pressed to a Division, he should certainly support his hon. and learned Friend.

MR. W. BECKETT (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw) said, that, for his own part, he quite agreed with the order embodied in the words of the Amendment; but he did not agree with the words of the Preamble—

"Unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust."

He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accept the suggestion made from the Benches opposite. He had received a considerable number of letters from various persons occupying the position of Trustees who complained of the limited range of investments; and he thought it was expedient that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should enlarge the powers of investment under the sanction of the Court of Chancery.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that it was only by the indulgence of the House that he could speak again. He would earnestly

list includes a large number of applications from Downpatrick Union, and why no special list was published for Downpatrick; and, if he can say at what dates sittings of a Sub-Commission will be held to hear the fair rent applications of the leaseholders and present tenants from the Unions of Banbridge and Downpatrick who are entitled to the benefit of the reduction in respect of the half-year's rent due at 1st November last?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners are at present on Circuit in the County Clare, and they are unable to furnish the required information until Saturday next.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885
—THE TENANTS OF THE MARQUESS
OF LONDONDERRY, CO. DOWN.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the two Circulars recently sent to the County Down tenants of the Lord Lieutenant, signed by His Excellency's land agent, Mr. Brownlow, in which the Marquess of Londonderry holds out strong inducements to the tenants to purchase their holdings, and declares his inability to continue to give to his tenants the reduction—

"Which he has granted the last two years, and by giving which he has received absolutely nothing from his own property;"

whether he is aware that owing to charges on the Londonderry estates created by the late Marquess of Londonderry, and not on account of any default on the part of the tenants, or by reason of any benefits given to them by the landlord, this inability to accept a reduced rent arises; and, whether, considering that according to present arrangements none of the fair rent applications made by the tenants of the Marquess of Londonderry are to be listed for hearing at the first sitting of the County Down Sub-Commission at Newtownards in May next, and considering that nearly 4,000 applications from County Down still remain unheard, he will now take steps to have an additional Sub-Commission appointed for that county?

Mr. M'Cartan

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: My attention has been called to the Circulars in question through the hon. Member who puts this Question sending them to me. I have no knowledge as to whether the inability to accept a reduced rent arises from charges on the estate created by the late owner or otherwise. As has been stated, the Government are anxiously considering the steps to be taken to deal with the arrears of business in the Land Commission.

CRIMINAL LAW — CONVICTION OF
JOHN RUSSELL AT BIRMINGHAM
ASSIZES.

SIR JOHN COMMEREILL (Southampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to the report of the trial at Birmingham Assizes of John Russell, aged 60, alias Cooper and "Australian Jemmy," who was sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude for burglariously entering the house of Dr. Robins, surgeon, Grantham Road, Birmingham, when Mr. Justice Smith, in passing sentence, said the prisoner had been twice sentenced to transportation for life, and also to 10 years' penal servitude for burglary with violence; and, since after two life sentences he has been set at liberty, when under the present system this offender will be again at large?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This convict's career is remarkable. In 1850 he was sentenced to transportation for life for burglary. This sentence was reduced to one of 10 years by the Secretary of State in 1853, at the end of which time he was pardoned. In 1861 he was again sentenced to transportation for life for wounding with intent; but he seems to have escaped from Australia by some means or other, for in 1875 he was sentenced in this country to 10 years' penal servitude for sacrilege. He served the whole of this sentence, and he is now again under a sentence of 15 years. In the ordinary course, if he behaves well, he will be due for release in 11 years five months, unless, possibly, the life sentence were to be enforced.

INLAND REVENUE—EXCISE LICENCES

—THE EMPIRE THEATRE, LEICESTER SQUARE.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Excise Authorities are aware that wines, spirits, and beer are nightly sold by retail at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, London, no magistrates' licence having been granted for the sale of excisable articles upon such premises; why the persons concerned in such sales have not been proceeded against by the Excise Authorities; and, whether it is the intention of the Authorities to institute proceedings?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Commissioners of Inland Revenue are aware that intoxicating liquors are sold by retail at the Empire Theatre. After the theatre had been licensed by the Justices as a place of public entertainment, an application was made to the Commissioners to issue an Excise licence for the sale of liquors there under Section 7 of the Act 5 & 6 Will. IV. c. 39; but the Commissioners were advised that since the passing of the Licensing Act of 1872, they had ceased to have the power to issue a licence in England under that section for any place except a theatre. The point, however, is not free from doubt; and a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel the Commissioners to issue the licence was granted by the Court of Queen's Bench on the 13th of December last. Upon service of this Rule the Commissioners felt they were not justified in objecting to the sale of liquors, or in taking any steps which might have the effect of postponing the opening of the house, and throwing a large number of persons out of employment. They, therefore, accepted a deposit of the amount of duty which would be payable on the licence, pending the argument of the Rule. It is expected that the Rule will come on for argument in the course of next month.

DR. CLARK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that last year an application was made to the magistrates for a licence, which was refused, and that power was only given to the Commissioners to grant a special licence of three days, and that those

three days had been going on ever since Christmas of last year?

MR. GOSCHEN: The Commissioners have not granted a licence, but a Rule *Nisi* for a *mandamus* to compel them to do so has been granted; and it is in consequence of that that the sale of intoxicating liquors at the theatre has been permitted. If the Commissioners are held to have been right in refusing the licence, of course the sale will be stopped.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL

—REDEMPTION OF UNCONVERTED STOCKS.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in order that holders of Consols and Reduced Stock may know exactly what is the alternative to immediate conversion of their Stocks into new Stock, he will state whether a year's notice will be given immediately after the 11th May of the redemption of all or any unconverted Stocks; and, if not, when it will be given; and, is another Act of Parliament necessary to enable the notice to be given, or to redeem the Stocks not now converted; and, if so, whether he proposes to introduce the Bill during this Session?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am unable to state at present when or where this notice will be given. I shall not be able to make such a statement until the result of the conversion of the New Threes is practically known and decided. Another Act of Parliament is not necessary to give the notice, but a Resolution of the House would be necessary; and I hope, within a short time, to be able to state whether I shall propose to the House to pass that Resolution or not.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether any Act of Parliament is necessary to redeem the Stock.

MR. GOSCHEN: A Resolution of notice for paying off the Stock by instalments is sufficient for the purpose; but if larger measures were proposed, it might be necessary to pass an Act of Parliament to direct the mode and manner in which the payment should be made.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

SIR JOHN DORINGTON (Gloucester, Tewkesbury) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could lay upon the Table before the Easter Recess a Paper showing the probable number of members of the County Councils for each of the counties in England and Wales under the new Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir; it will be impossible for us to lay this on the Table before Easter. It is a matter which necessitates much investigation. I will, however, undertake to lay it on the Table before the Bill leaves Committee.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE EDENDERRY UNION.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he can arrange for the Land Commissioners to hear the large number of cases in the Edenderry Union, and so relieve the tenants from the hardships of further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: A Sub-Commission will sit next month for that portion of the Edenderry Union which is in the County Meath. No sitting has yet been fixed for the other portions of the Union.

DR. FOX: Is the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that nearly four years have elapsed since a sitting has been held in the King's County Division, or know that there are several hundred cases to be disposed of?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: If the hon. Gentleman will put a Notice on the Paper I will make inquiries.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): This is a matter of very great importance. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has stated several times that the Government were giving their most anxious consideration to this vital question. ["Order, order!"] If necessary, I will move the adjournment of the House, in order to call attention to the question as a matter of urgent public im-

portance. I wish to ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman if he can give us any idea, as it is four years since the Sub-Commissioners sat in Edenderry Union, when his anxious consideration and the anxious consideration of the Government is supposed to begin, and when it is likely to come to a conclusion?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I should be exceedingly surprised if I discovered that it was four years, or anything approaching four years, since the Sub-Commissioners sat in the King's County Division of the Edenderry Union.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): It is now four weeks ago since the right hon. and gallant Gentleman told me that the Government were anxiously considering whether they should increase the number of Sub-Commissioners. I wish to know whether the Government are not only going to take the question into consideration, but are going to keep it there?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, as the Head of Her Majesty's Government, for an answer in reference to this important question, the delay in reference to which, he must be aware, is causing a number of tenants to be turned into caretakers. When will Her Majesty's Government be able to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners to deal with the glut of Land Commissioners' work which now prevails in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): This matter has received, and is receiving, the very serious consideration of the Government, who are desirous of dealing with the question at the earliest possible moment. But it is one which requires very careful consideration. [An hon. MEMBER: Ten years.] Having regard to the fact that the Land Commission itself is on the point of expiring, there will be no delay whatever in dealing with the matter.

SCOTLAND—CROFTERS AND COTTARS IN ELGIN, &c.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Lord Advocate, Will the Government agree to a Return of the number of Crofters and Cottars in the Counties of Elgin, Nairn, Banff, Aberdeen, Perth, and Stirling?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): As I have repeatedly stated in this House, the expressions "crofter" and "cottar" do not convey the same meaning in different parts of Scotland. Such a Return as the hon. Member proposes would, therefore, be misleading. Besides, there is no machinery for taking such a Return, and the Government, therefore, cannot assent to it.

MR. ANDERSON asked, whether the words did not convey the same meaning in the Counties of Elgin and Nairn, Banff and Aberdeen.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he could not name the counties; but it was undoubtedly the case that the words had not the same meaning in all the counties referred to in the Question.

IRELAND—THE ENGLISH DEPUTATION.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an English deputation who recently visited Ireland were watched and followed from place to place by policemen and detectives; if so, whether such a course was taken at the request of Her Majesty's Government; whether any Reports were made to the Government; and, whether such Reports will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: If the hon. Member is so good as to mention the English deputation to which he refers, I shall be glad to give him the information.

ORDER (METROPOLIS)—THE SPECIAL CONSTABLES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will state the total cost incurred in consequence of the recent swearing-in of special constables within the Metropolitan District; and, whether he will lay upon the Table an account of the items of expenditure?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) in reply, said, the total cost incurred was a frac-

tion over £1,500, of which £1,033 odd were for truncheons and badges, and somewhat under £100 for rent and lighting of offices, and miscellaneous expenses made up the balance. He did not think any useful purpose would be served by laying the accounts on the Table.

LAW AND JUSTICE—DELAYS IN THE CITY OF LONDON COURT.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been drawn to a Petition, recently presented to the Lord Chancellor, in reference to delays in the conduct of business in the City of London Court; and, whether he is able to say whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): My attention has been called to the Petition referred to in the Question of the hon. Member. It is certainly signed by gentlemen who have great experience with reference to business in the City of London Court. The matter is under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor, and I will see that the attention of the City Authorities is also called to the Petition.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—MEMBERS' PLACES.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the inconvenience at present existing with regard to Members serving on Select Committees who wish to secure places in the House; and, whether he will give facilities for the discussion of the new Rule of Procedure on that subject standing in the name of the hon. Baronet the Member for Hereford (Sir Joseph Bailey), and the Amendment thereto by the hon. Member for North Essex.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (in reply) said, he was aware that hon. Gentlemen serving on Select Committees were exposed to considerable inconvenience in regard to the seats they desired to occupy in the House. He thought the question was one which deserved consideration. He hoped the Motion of the hon. Member for Hereford would be reached in time. Any assistance he

could give in the solution of the difficulty would be heartily given.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any general official objection, pending the decision of the Royal Commission on Civil Service Departments, to any Civil Servant in this country being a member of the "Irish National League of Great Britain," and, whether the question is left by the Treasury to be separately decided by the Heads of the several Departments?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No circumstances have as yet come to my knowledge which would require special Regulations to be issued as to Civil Servants joining the National League of Great Britain. As I have before stated, much must be left to the discretion of Civil Servants themselves; and, while we strongly deprecate overt acts indicating violent partizanship, we are unwilling to attempt too vigorously to define the precise limits within which the political opinion of Civil servants may legitimately find expression.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would say specifically whether it was left to the discretion of the Heads of different Departments to decide whether A might belong to the Primrose League and that B could not belong to the National League of Great Britain?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think that any such authority exists with the Heads of Departments as that which is suggested by the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

Subsequently,

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that as he had not been able to obtain a clear idea of the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman another Question. It was this—whether those Members of the Civil Service of Great Britain, many in number, who belonged to the National League, were by so belonging infringing any Rule which exists in the Civil Service generally; and, whether they are to look to the Treasury for legality for their position, or look to the Heads of their several Departments?

Mr. W. H. Smith

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was sorry he could not add anything to the answer given to the hon. Member.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which I have not given him Notice, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to initiate legislation to carry out the Resolution on the subject of Irish Arrears passed by this House yesterday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No. There is no present intention on the part of the Government to do so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to an Order which stands in his name for the appointment of an additional Judge to the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, Whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with it to-night?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Yes; unless there is a strong objection to its being proceeded with. It was represented that there was urgent necessity for additional strength.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Am I wrong in supposing that this is the first notice which the House has had of the intention of the Government in the matter? The House, up to the present time, has had no information as to the intention of the Government to appoint an additional Judge, imposing a further burden of £5,000 a-year.

MR. W. H. SMITH replied that the Notice was put on the Paper on Tuesday last. Undoubtedly, there would be an additional charge on the Consolidated Fund.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman wish the House to decide absolutely to-night as to this additional appointment?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I stated that I would not press the matter if there was any strong objection.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

In reply to Mr. FIRTH (Dundee),

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he apprehended that the Royal Commission of Inquiry with reference to the Metropolitan Board of Works would retrospectively include everything from the foundation of the Board.

MR. DILLON AND SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol a Question in reference to a speech which he is reported to have made in the East of London last night. He is reported to have used these words—

“Our opponents may be loyal subjects of the Queen, but it is difficult for us to understand how that loyalty is compatible with intimate association with men who—as I myself heard the other night in the House of Commons—make it a grievance that Her Majesty’s soldiers should beguile a tedious march by singing ‘God save the Queen.’”

I wish, in the first place, to ask whether that is a correct report of his speech?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir.

MR. DILLON: Under those circumstances, I must claim the right to address a personal explanation to the House, as I presume the charge is levelled against myself.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH assented.

MR. DILLON: I regret to be obliged, Sir, to say that I consider it to be a very gross misrepresentation. I wish to direct the attention of the House to what the nature of the charge is. It is perfectly specific. It charges me with having made it a matter of grievance that the soldiers of the Queen should beguile a tedious march by singing “God save the Queen.” What are the circumstances of which I complain? To begin with, there was no tedious march. The soldiers of the Queen were brought into Ennis on the occasion of a Nationalist demonstration of a very advanced character. Into the merits of the demonstration it is not necessary for me to

enter. They were brought to the town for the purpose of maintaining the peace of the town if the peace was disturbed; and as usual, upon such occasions, they were confined to the barracks while the demonstration was going on. I now come to what I complain of. The soldiers, instead of being confined to the barrack until the crowds had dispersed after the demonstration was over (as is usual on occasions of the kind) were marched out of the barracks while the streets were thronged by thousands of persons who were returning from the demonstration. They were marched against these thronging thousands, at the imminent danger of a collision; and while the marching was going on they sang “God save the Queen” and “Rule Britannia,” and they were headed by the Resident Magistrate, who might have to sit on the Bench as Judge afterwards, who is I am informed, specially appointed to sit and adjudicate in the district. I leave it to this House, and think it is eminently a case for personal explanation, as to whether it is right for a right hon. Gentleman to so outrageously misrepresent the action of a fellow Member of this House for political purposes, and I shall merely conclude by placing the two statements side by side. The statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol is that I complained of Her Majesty’s soldiers beguiling a weary march by singing “God save the Queen.” Well, I complain of four or five things, which I shall now repeat—There was no weary march in the question at all. I complain of the soldiers being turned out of the barracks before the crowd had left the town, which they were doing peaceably. I complain of those soldiers being marched through an excited crowd when there was not a shadow of disturbance, and when they ought to have been kept in barracks; and I complain of their singing songs on that march, a course which was never pursued by soldiers in that district before, although they have been frequently brought in for a similar purpose; and, finally, I complain that a man who might be, if any riot occurred, sitting on the Bench, returning at the head of those soldiers, in the face of the people, singing “Rule Britannia.” It is not a question of whether it is a right or wrong. The question is whether the

right hon. Gentleman stated what was true or not; and I have now told you what I complained of, and I leave it to the House to judge whether or not that was a fair and honest representation.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I will simply say that the hon. Member has not had the courtesy to give me private Notice of his intention to bring this matter forward, and therefore I have not been able to refer to the answer given by my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) to the Question asked by the hon. Member the other night. I am, like the hon. Member, quite content to leave the matter to the judgment of the House—who know what the Question and Answer were. It is my impression that the effect of the Question and Answer is precisely what I represented.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) —
SALARIES OF DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATES—LEGISLATION.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, To inform the House when the Government proposed to introduce the Bill to legalize the payment of salaries to Divisional Magistrates in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It will depend very much on the course of Public Business; but I hope the Bill will be brought in shortly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL.

(Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer,
Mr. Jackson.)

[BILL 164.] THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read (*Queen's Consent, and Prince of Wales' Consent as Duke of Cornwall, signified*).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

MR. DODDS (Stockton) said, that his attention had been called that morning to the provision contained in Clause 5 as to the difficulty which would arise owing to the shortness of time allowed

to trustees under the Bill for procuring the assent of their *cestui que* trusts. It must be remembered that trustees were under the necessity of procuring the assent of all persons interested in the trust fund, and a great number of them might, at this season of the year, be in different parts of the world, so that their assent could not be procured in the course of a few days. Then, again, when the assent of the Judge was required before a trustee could act, the difficulty was almost greater. He assumed that it was intended to obtain the Royal Assent to the Bill on Tuesday next. He would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that on the same day the Courts would rise for the Easter Vacation, and not sit again till the 12th of April. In many cases, he apprehended that the Vacation Judge would hardly be the proper person to consider applications of this kind. Where the estate was being administered in the Court of Chancery, he apprehended that it would be necessary to apply to the Judge to whose Court the particular estate was attached. There was no chance of the application being made before the 1st of April, and if all these cases were to be left to the Vacation Judge, it was simply impossible for him to consider the numerous cases that would be brought before him. Under those circumstances, and expressing his regret that he had not been able to direct attention to the point earlier, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able, if not in that House, in "another place" to grant some extension of time within which trustees might signify their assent to the scheme, or failing to do so, be bound by the provisions of the Act. The question was one of vital importance to trustees generally, and for their sake he thought there ought to be some extension of time before this provision became law.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) said, he rose to move the re-committal of the Bill, with a view to insert the following new Clause relating to the re-investment of trust funds:—

"Any trust funds now invested in New Three Pounds per Cent Stock, Consolidated Three Pounds per Cent Stock, or Reduced Three Pounds per Cent Stock may, instead of being converted under this Act, unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust, be reinvested by the trustees thereof in the purchase of—

Mr. Dillon

- "(1.) Debenture stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament ;
- "(2.) Preference guaranteed lien annuity or rent-charge stock, the dividend on which is not contingent on the profits of the year of such Railway Companies in Great Britain as have paid a dividend on their ordinary stock for ten years immediately preceding the date of investment ;
- "(3.) Stock or annuities issued by any Municipal Corporation of Great Britain, which annuities or the interest or dividend upon which stock are secured upon rates or taxes levied by such Municipal Corporation under the authority of any Act of Parliament ;
- "(4.) Stocks or other public funds of the government of any colony of the United Kingdom approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, and also bonds or documents of debt of any such government approved as aforesaid, provided such stocks, bonds, or others are not payable to bearer."

He wished to call the attention of the House shortly to a somewhat important point in regard to which he asked to extend the power of investment. Only yesterday the Government had assented to an extension in this direction by providing that trust funds might be invested as certain funds under the control of the Court of Chancery were allowed to be invested. There was a general feeling that a further privilege should be extended to trust funds dealt with by the Bill. He, therefore, asked the House to re-commit the Bill for the purpose of introducing a clause extending the power of investment to the Debenture Stock of Railway Companies in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament, which had paid a dividend on their ordinary Stock for 10 years immediately preceding the date of investment ; upon the Stock or annuities issued by municipal corporations and colonial Stocks or other public funds approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice. He would point out that the concession made yesterday was really a very small extension. The Court of Chancery allowed trustees to invest, besides the ordinary Three per Cent Government Stock, in India Four per Cents, in Metropolitan Board of Works Stocks, and on mortgage on real securities. With regard to real securities, the extension of the power of trustees in regard to investment was very trifling, because, in consequence of the depression in the value of land, no trustee was likely

to invest funds under his control in real property. Therefore real securities must be put aside as an investment. Then, with regard to India Four per Cents he believed there was a sum of £50,000,000 or £60,000,000 in which trustees could invest. He now asked the House to accept his proposition, because a precedent had already been established for it some years ago. What he asked the Government to do in this case was already the law in Scotland in reference to trust funds. In the year 1884, an Act was passed providing for the investment of trust funds in Scotland which gave to trustees in Scotland the identical power for which he now asked. He did not think the House would say the Scotch people were not prudent in the matter of investment, and if they were contented to have a power of this kind, and to use it constantly, it was quite evident that it had been found to work effectually. Therefore, there would be no danger in introducing the same provision with regard to trust funds in this country. All that he asked was that the power already given to trustees should be extended to other classes of security—such as Preference and Debenture Stocks of Railway Companies. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to them in introducing the Bill as having increased very much in value, and no one could doubt that they were a first-class security. He only asked that such Preferential Stocks should be available as had paid a dividend on their Ordinary Stock for 10 years preceding the date of investment. In the first place, he asked for the inclusion of the Corporation Stocks of the various municipal towns in the Kingdom. He thought it would be conceded that these were as safe an investment as the Metropolitan Board of Works Stock. That was an investment already approved of by the Court of Chancery. He would ask the House how it could be said that the Corporation Stocks of the various towns of the country and the equally valuable Stock created by the Metropolitan Board of Works were not ample security for the investment of trust funds? Everybody knew that the Corporation Stocks of such towns as Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester were a most valuable security, and he asked why the principle which had

already been adopted in regard to the Metropolitan Board of Works should not be extended to the Stocks of these various Corporations? In the next place, he proposed colonial securities as another branch of investment which had operated well in Scotland. Trustees at present might invest in one branch of Colonial Stock—namely, the India Four per Cents, and he failed to see why they should not be able to invest in the New South Wales Three-and-a-Half per Cents, as well as in the India Four per Cents. Nevertheless, trustees were permitted to invest trust funds in Indian Stock, while they were not permitted to invest in the Stock of New South Wales and other Colonies. The clause he had drawn up contained a provision that the Court of Chancery should make an order as to which of the Colonial Stocks trust funds might be invested in. He thought the proposal was a very reasonable one, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would thoroughly understand that he had no desire to interfere with the success of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, nor did he believe that his present proposal would militate in any way against it. He did not think that it would affect the financial scheme of the right hon. Gentleman in any degree whatever; but inasmuch as the scheme would have the effect of necessarily cutting down small incomes, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to open the door to other securities, by means of which trustees would be enabled to get a dividend equivalent to 3 per cent. If that were not done, and it was not suggested that they would affect the success of the financial scheme, the impression would get abroad that the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to convert the Government Stocks into Consols, and to compel trustees to invest in them. Under these circumstances, he asked the House to allow the Bill to be re-committed for the purpose of introducing the clause of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of a New Clause."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (*Mr. Goschen*) (*St. George's,*

Mr. Anderson

Hanover Square) said, he regretted that the Government could not accept the proposal of the hon. and learned Member. It appeared to him that the hon. and learned Member desired to substitute, for the Consols in which parents and testators had desired to invest, a variety of other securities, although it was the evident intention of such testators to bind up their money tightly in Government securities and not allow them to be invested either in Colonial Bonds, or any other securities. The Government had gone as far as it could by providing yesterday that a certain limited amount of Stock sanctioned by the Court of Chancery might take the place of Consols, and every person who chose could, by re-investment in those funds, get 3 per cent, because the Stocks in question would give them 3 per cent. But the hon. and learned Member went beyond that, and proposed to include Stocks which gave more than 3 per cent, and also gave power to Trustees to choose their investments. Whether that was a right or wrong principle, it ought to be looked at apart from the present Bill; and the question whether the investments authorized by the Court of Chancery ought to be widened or not could not come within the scope of that measure. He would illustrate that point. The hon. and learned Member seemed to suggest that the Court of Chancery should determine what kind of Colonial Stock might be bought in place of Preference Stock. He could hardly imagine the Court of Chancery sitting down to inquire into the condition of the Colonies in order to decide which of the Colonial Stocks should be sanctioned and which should not. There would probably be a jealousy on the part of the Colonies that were left out. Again, there were such cases as extravagant Colonies piling up debt very fast; and he did not think that the House would desire to substitute any cases where the testator or the parent deliberately wished to leave tied up in Government securities investments of the class included in the proposals of the hon. and learned Member. The Government had gone as far as they thought the case allowed. They had admitted such securities as had been sanctioned hitherto; but they could not, by an incidental clause in the Bill, re-open or sanction a principle of far wider applica-

tion—namely, that of putting Colonial and other Stocks precisely in the same position as the Stocks of this country. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), he thought the hon. Member had not noticed Sub-section 3 of Clause 9, which provided that investment in various Stocks sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should not be deemed a change of investment. He would engage himself as far as this—in any exceptional case where there was a difficulty in obtaining the sanction of all the Trustees, no attempt would be made to take any advantage of any delay, official or otherwise, on the part of any owner so as to exclude him from the benefits of the Act. The Bill, however, had been varied, and he thought the hon. Member would find that his objection had disappeared.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he could not understand why the Government declined to accept the suggestion that securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery should be available for the investment of Trust Funds. He felt the force of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the proposition to invest in a variety of securities; and perhaps it would not be right to allow a Trustee to select the kind of security in which he would invest. But he was not asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do anything of a speculative or experimental nature; but to follow legislation which had already been sanctioned by the House. He failed to see why the Government could not, consistently with what they did yesterday, extend slightly the clause of the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Cozens-Hardy). When the Settled Lands Act was passed in 1882 a course was taken which he thought might with justice be followed now, seeing that it affected the matter they were now discussing. It was determined by that Act that on land being sold the money might be invested on Government securities, or on other securities which the Act described. By that Act the Legislature allowed the money of a testator to be invested in land, and set what was to be done with the derived from such securities sanctioned of the Stock of any

which had for 10 years before the date of investment paid a dividend on its ordinary stock and shares. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Elgin and Nairn (Mr. Anderson) asked the House to continue in this instance what was, in reality, a perfectly safe piece of legislation; and the reason they were asked to do so was that the step taken by the Government would not secure 3 per cent from investments in Consols. He would remind the Government that they were not really asked to interfere with any principle beyond that which was interfered with yesterday. They were only asked to extend the clause, so as to enable the interest upon invested Trust Funds to be increased from 2½ to 3 per cent, but no investment would be allowed to take place except with the sanction of the Court of Chancery. The Debenture Stock of a Railway Company which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock and shares for 10 years must be a safe investment. He did not approach the question in any spirit of hostility towards the Government; nor did he know whether it would be better to make an appeal to the Government in "another place," or to take the matter in hand now. He would advise his hon. and learned Friend not to press the Government now; but to give them an opportunity of considering the matter. But if that course was not taken, and the Motion was pressed to a Division, he should certainly support his hon. and learned Friend.

MR. W. BECKETT (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw) said, that, for his own part, he quite agreed with the order embodied in the words of the Amendment; but he did not agree with the words of the Preamble—

"Unless it is specially prohibited by the constitution or terms of the trust."

He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accept the suggestion made from the Benches opposite. He had received a considerable number of letters from various persons occupying the position of Trustees who complained of the limited range of investments; and he thought it was expedient that the Chancellor should enter

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entreat the House to pause before accepting the principle laid down by his right hon. and learned Friend opposite (Sir Henry James). The House must not only look at the narrow point, important as it was, of raising the income of a certain special class. [Sir HENRY JAMES: Maintaining.] It meant raising the income from the amount which would be derived from Consols. There was a much greater principle involved. The suggestion and the Amendment came to this—that new investments and other securities, such as Railway Debentures, were to be placed on the same footing as Government Stock. A precedent had been quoted to show that the concession had already been made, and that railway securities were looked upon as being as sound as land. This was not a question which could be dealt with in a hurry, involving, as it did, the establishment of the principle that Government securities were to be displaced from the position which they had held hitherto, of being confined to a small select number of securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, and that a much broader range should be given to investments. The proposal, if adopted, would really strike a blow on what he might call the credit of the State. He would not say it was a matter that ought not to be allowed; but he thought it ought not to be done until it had received the fullest consideration. He suggested that the question should be raised upon Lord Herschell's Bill with regard to the power of trustees. When that Bill came before the House the matter might be thoroughly discussed; but it could not be conveniently dealt with on the present occasion. What he wished to press upon the House was that in attempting to deal with a certain limited number of cases they were really introducing a new principle into the finances of the State, which might be fraught with considerable danger. He was sure that his right hon. Friend opposite would be aware of the force of this objection; because when once they admitted a security, and the security was found to be unsatisfactory, it would be extremely difficult to go back. He had been treated with such singular courtesy and consideration during the whole of the debates on this Bill, and he had found such a spirit of co-operation in all parts of the House, that he was most reluctant to establish

Mr. Goschen

a point of difference with any hon. or right hon. Gentleman; but acting as guardian of the public purse, he could not depart from the principle to which he attached so much force.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the reason given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for resisting the Amendment was that it was undesirable to raise such a broad principle, as this appeared to be, on the last stage of the Bill in that House. He (Mr. Fowler) would, however, point out that the question was very fully discussed before a very strong Select Committee, presided over by Lord Cross, to consider Lord Cairns' Settled Land Act. The principle was then settled that Trustees selling settled land should have power to invest not only in Consols, Government securities, and Court of Chancery, but on the security of bonds, mortgages, or Debentures of Railway Companies which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock for 10 years. Therefore, the principle involved in the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn had already been settled by the House—namely, that Trustees should have power to invest not only in Government securities, but in Railway Debentures. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the Lord Chancellor and their Legal Advisers, would reconsider the matter, with a view of ascertaining whether, with due regard to the safety of the State, the concession now asked might not be made? He would not ask the right hon. Gentleman to deal with the matter at once; but simply to promise that it should be dealt with in "another place."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to remind the House of the way in which the question arose—the attention of the Government had been prominently called to the matter; and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) not only by representations made inside the House, but by representations made by the general public. The matter had, therefore, been considered; and he hoped and trusted that something might be done in general legislation, if not in connection with the present Bill. They had already agreed to include those securities in which the Court of Chancery allowed trust money to be invested; but

they did not consider that that embraced the larger question which was now raised—namely, securities upon which a high rate of interest was obtained. He trusted that those who were interested in the matter would be satisfied with the assurance he had given. All he could say was that the Government were exceedingly anxious that Trustees should be empowered to invest in other securities, provided that it was consistent with the safe security of the trusts committed to their charge.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the hon. and learned Attorney General had, he thought, put the matter on the safest footing. He was sorry to say that he was Trustee for so many people that nothing would personally suit him better than some proposal like the present; but, in his opinion, it would be altogether opposed to sound principle. But he was obliged to differ from his right hon. and learned Friend who sat near him. He was afraid that if they gave to Railway Debentures this special character of being on a par with Government securities, it would be impossible to exclude other securities, just as safe; and, even as to railways, looking through the list of securities, it would be found that there were 50 or 60 which would be admitted under this scheme. He quite agreed with the hon. and learned Attorney General and his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the matter was a proper one to consider in connection with the Bill which was coming down from "another place;" but he thought it would be dangerous to do anything now in the direction proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had listened with great pleasure to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Childers); and he hoped the Government would adhere to the course they had marked out for themselves. It was all very well to speak of Railway Debentures; and it might be desirable, when an individual was investing considerable sums of money every year, that he should be able to invest in ordinary Railway Stock; but he did hope that the House would not sanction the proposal of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Anderson), and place these large and

miscellaneous securities in the same position as Consols.

SIR HENRY JAMES was understood to ask what course the Government would take when the Bill now before "another place" came down? Would the Government give facilities for its full consideration?

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was a Bill in which considerable interest was taken; and he thought it desirable that it should receive the best consideration. Ample opportunities would be afforded for discussing what securities should be authorized; and the list should be examined, with a view of ascertaining whether those which were now sanctioned could be increased with safety. He hoped that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) would not be disposed to press the Amendment to a Division. He was unable so far to compromise the present position of the Government as to hold out any hope, though, speaking for himself, he would be prepared to place Railway Debentures in the same position as Government securities. He quite admitted that a somewhat extended area might be allowed for investments. No doubt, there would be ample facilities for considering the matter hereafter; but he could not go beyond that.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (MR. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he hoped the House would permit him to say one word, although he had not heard the whole of the debate. The question of enlarging the power of Trustees was one which undoubtedly deserved consideration, and might be followed up by some practical result; but he demurred to such an enlargement of the Bill as was now proposed. The Bill was a measure to enable the Government to pay off certain holders of Stock, and the holders of the New Three per Cents were entitled to be paid off if they liked. There was no compulsion; but, as a matter of course, they would, if paid off, have their money to invest as they might or could. The holders of any of the Government Stock would be entitled under the Bill either to be paid off, or to remain as they were. That was a transaction which was complete in itself, and it would only embarrass the transaction to give power to invest in other securities. The object of the Bill was clear, and it would be bad policy to go beyond it.

MR. SPEAKER inquired whether the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn wished to withdraw the Amendment?

MR. ANDERSON said, he trusted that he might be allowed to say a word. He had given Notice of the Amendment some time ago, and it had been on the Notice Paper for several days; but owing to the Forms of the House he had not been able to bring it on. Therefore, it could not be said that he had taken the Government by surprise; and he should have been prepared to withdraw the Amendment if some assurance had been given that the principle involved in the Amendment would be accepted. He had entirely failed to hear anything of the kind from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, therefore, he must go to a Division.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question put.

Bill read the third time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill do pass."

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary JACKSON, verbal Amendments made.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that he objected to the course the Government were taking. Amendments had been moved which were alleged to be purely verbal, but of which the House had no means of judging. Instead of taking that course on a Bill of so momentous a character, the Government ought to have re-committed the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: I read the Amendments to the House. I understand this to be a merely verbal Amendment transposing the words and leaving the sense precisely as before.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he would explain that a mere transposition of words had been effected in the clause accepted yesterday. He was exceedingly sorry to have to move the Amendment at so late a stage; but it could not be avoided.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *passed*.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.—[BILL 132.]
(Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews,
Mr. Solicitor General.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he took no credit to the Government for bringing this measure before the House, as they had enjoyed the advantage of the labours of other men and of previous Governments in previous years. The Bill proposed that prisoners and their wives should be competent but not compellable witnesses; that a man or his wife might give evidence on the man's behalf, but could not be forced to do so. There were, however, certain restrictions in the Bill as to the cross-examination of prisoners. The first great reason for the Bill was that during the last 20 years some 10 or 15 new offences had been created, with regard to which, almost without exception, a prisoner or his wife could give evidence. This was so, for instance, in the Explosives Acts, the Acts relating to conspiracy, the Food and Drugs Acts, the Merchant Shipping Acts—as to sending unseaworthy ships to sea—and notably in the case of the Criminal Law Amendment Act passed in 1885. The result was that the law was in a most anomalous condition. There was a number of offences in regard to which a prisoner could give evidence, and a number of kindred offences in which he could not give evidence. He had been furnished by members of both branches of the Legal Profession with extraordinary instances of the unjust operation of the present Law of Evidence. There was a prosecution at the Old Bailey, and two prisoners were indicted. It was desirable to prove their presence in another place at the time. One prisoner was married, and the other kept a mistress, and the latter was allowed to give the evidence which the lawful wife was debarred from giving. A man could be examined as to whether he had forged a trade mark; but he could not be examined on the charge of forging a cheque. Under the Criminal Law Amendment Act a man was permitted to be a witness, and might prove his own innocence; but if charged with precisely analogous

offences coming under the pre-existing law his mouth would be closed. It might be asked whether the changes already made in the direction of the Bill had proved to be satisfactory. He had communicated with a number of the Judges to ascertain their opinion on the question whether the new law on this subject worked well. They had many years' experience of it, and during the last three years hundreds of cases had occurred under the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and the unanimous testimony of both Bench and Bar was that it had the effect of allowing innocent men in several instances to get off, and causing guilty men to be convicted. He could, for instance, give several cases in which the evidence of children under the Act just referred to could only be rebutted by the statement of the man charged; and it had been on his statement, and the way in which he had given evidence, that an acquittal had been obtained, which could not otherwise have been obtained. All would admit that the first object to be attained was that the innocent should not suffer; and that it would be better for several guilty persons to escape than that one innocent man should be convicted. Mr. Justice Stephen had expressed himself strongly on the absurd state of a law by which a man charged with personating a voter could be examined, but not a man charged with personation and attempt to defraud; and a man could be examined with respect to the sending of an unseaworthy ship to sea, but not on a charge of manslaughter by negligence in so doing. But the Parliamentary history of the question was enough to justify the Bill. Efforts had been made for more than 20 years to change the law in this direction. The first Bill on the question was brought forward by two Irish Members—and he commended this fact to hon. Members below the Gangway—Mr. Scully and Mr. MacMahon. From that time to 1878 constant attempts of the same kind were made, and in 1879 the Report of the Criminal Law Commission was published. In 1883, before the Grand Committee on Law, the matter was fully investigated, with the result that a Bill was introduced in 1884 by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Derby (Sir William Harcourt), and Lord Herschell, the then Solicitor General. On the lines of that Bill the present measure proceeded. The Bill had passed the House of Lords three or four times; and he would remind those who had studied the speeches of the great lawyers in the past of the unanimity there had always been amongst them on this question. He believed this Bill had the assent of the lawyers, and of every hon. Member who had considered the question from a practical point of view. No one, he thought, could deny that there was an urgent demand for this Bill. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) was recently defending a man who was indicted for shooting another under very curious circumstances. On that occasion his hon. and learned Friend expressed his hope that the present Bill might become law; and Mr. Justice Stephen, concurring in this view, urged his hon. and learned Friend to do what he could to press forward this much-needed change in the law. The proposals he had submitted would tend to elicit the truth, would conduce to the ends of justice, would lead to innocent men being acquitted, and would bring out the truth in the case of guilty men. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, that this was not the first time that this Bill had been before the House, and that he had expressed the opinion, formed after considerable thought and experience, in favour of it. There were two considerations which made it perfectly clear that the law could not be allowed to remain as it now was. The first of these was that the law as it now stood was utterly inconsistent, inasmuch as in one set of cases the person accused was allowed to give evidence on his own behalf, and another set in which he was prohibited from doing so. This Bill, also, was justifiable on a very broad and sound principle—that the rule of law which incapacitated an accused person from giving evidence on his own behalf had the effect of excluding the evidence of the person who k of the transaction in questi

not hesitate to say that, upon his present information and judgment, he should be prepared to go even further than this Bill proposed to go, and to make the party accused not only a competent, but in some cases, at least, a compellable witness. He would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) whether he did not think there was, at least, one case in which a prisoner should be a compellable witness? That was the case of four or five persons jointly charged with an offence, against three or four of whom there might be cogent evidence, but as to the fifth there might be some evidence, but not of a cogent kind. As the law now stood, the fifth man might be convicted; but if he were enabled to call the men beside him in the dock, they would be compelled to say that he was not present at the commission of the crime. In the Maamtrasna case, many hon. Members—not only those from Ireland—felt very uneasy in their minds with regard to one of the accused persons who was hanged. He knew that the Solicitor General, the Under Secretary of State for India, and he himself, took great pains to investigate the case; and they all three came to the conclusion that there was strong reason for doubting whether one man who was found guilty of murder with the rest, and suffered for it, was guilty of or took an active part in the crime. Could that man have called his fellow-prisoners and his wife as witnesses, it would, in all probability, have saved him from death. The law ought not to be directed towards the protection of the guilty, or to extend to them even an artificial protection; and he was prepared to go beyond what the Bill proposed in the matter of examining accused persons. There was one point that he should like to ask the Attorney General, whether he thought it necessary to insist upon doing what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) did not insist upon doing—extend the operation of the Bill to Ireland? In the interest of the Bill itself, which, after all, was a new departure in our judicial system, it would be better to see how it operated in England before extending it to Ireland, where, whether rightly or wrongly, under the existing system, a widespread distrust of the administration of the law was unquestion-

Sir Charles Russell

ably felt. He would relate a little incident to illustrate that feeling. During the trials of the dynamitards at the Old Bailey, before Judge Hawkins, a few years ago, a friend of his, a respectable Presbyterian minister, from the North of Ireland, was desirous of hearing the trials, and he (Sir Charles Russell) obtained him a pass to the Court. Subsequently the clergyman called on him at his chambers, and said—

“I was never more astonished in the whole course of my life! Why, a criminal trial in the Old Bailey is not like what I am accustomed to see in Ireland. The prosecuting counsel and the Judge were most anxious that nothing unfair to the prisoners should be mentioned, while in Ireland it is a scramble on the part of those who represent the Crown to secure a conviction.”

He did not wish it to be thought that, in giving this illustration, he intended to infer that the Judges, or others who were entrusted with the administration of the law in Ireland, were intentionally or consciously unfair; but he knew that there was a very considerable feeling against legal administration, which would, he feared, be intensified if the Bill were applied to Ireland.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, that he also was very desirous to see the Bill passed, and would join in the appeal of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster). Everybody who knew anything about the administration of the Criminal Law knew how badly this measure was wanted in the interests of justice and mercy. It was wanted for the purpose of obtaining the exoneration of innocent men, as well as for deciding upon the degrees of guilt, for it affected not only the verdict, but the sentence. They had had experience of the Bill in many directions; and many a man who had been prosecuted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act would now be undergoing penal servitude but for the right which he had to give evidence on his own behalf. If a justly accused prisoner gave his own version of the affair for which he had been arrested, the Judge, from merely hearing his evidence, could form an idea as to how far he was implicated, and might possibly mitigate some of the terribly severe sentences now inflicted. At present the Judge heard but one side of the story of brutality, cruelty, and false conduct. With regard to the inclusion of Ireland, he consented in

1883 to exclude Ireland from its operation, because he believed that it would be well to do so until they had had some experience of its working in this country. After some experience of its working in England, he thought it might be applied to Ireland; but as it was well known that the Irish Representatives were at present strongly opposed to it, he hoped the Government would not insist upon forcing it upon an unwilling people. He might remind the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite of the saying that the greatest enemy to the good was the best.

MR. WHARTON (York, W. R., Ripon) said, he believed that this Bill, which he hoped would pass into law, was one that would greatly assist in their duty those who had the administration of the Criminal Law, and also secure to those who were wrongly accused of crime greater facility for establishing their innocence. But there were three points to which he wished to refer. First, he read in the Bill that a person charged with an offence might be called as a witness, and, he asked, who was to call the prisoner? Was he to be called by the prosecuting counsel, the defending counsel, or by the Court itself? It seemed to him that on the Committee stage of the Bill it would be wise if some words were inserted more clearly to specify by whom the prisoner might be called. Secondly, with reference to the inquiry before the Grand Jury, the Bill said that the prisoner should not be called before the Grand Jury. He had always felt it to be a very anomalous condition of things that they should have an inquiry involving a charge against a prisoner entirely conducted in his absence; and he now thought that when they were dealing with a Bill of the kind it was worthy of their consideration whether this practice should be retained. His third question was, would the calling of the prisoner, without further evidence on his behalf, entitle the counsel for the prosecution to reply? He could not help thinking, if that were so, that this power of calling the prisoner might become something in the nature of a trap. It might be looked on as a trap if the counsel for the prosecution was to have the right of making a long speech on the statement which an unlearned or ignorant man might make. As he had said, he hoped

the Bill would pass, because he believed it would be the means of securing the acquittal of innocent persons; and if it tended to the conviction of the guilty, so much the better.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.), in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said, he desired to express his acknowledgments for what had fallen from the two hon. and learned Gentlemen (Sir Charles Russell and Sir Henry James) with regard to the application of the Bill to Ireland. If the Bill were to be applied under normal conditions he should offer no opposition to it. At present, however, the power to examine a prisoner and his witnesses as well existed in Ireland, and was frequently used in a manner most detrimental to the interests of the accused. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), however, was wrong as to the grievance complained of in the Maamtrasna case. The grievance was that Myles Joyce was not allowed to have his wife examined in his defence. He wished to know whether this measure, like the Coercion Bill, was going to be forced down the throats of the Irish people? The atmosphere of an Irish Court was totally different from that of an English Court of Justice, inasmuch as in the former every effort was made to insure the conviction of a prisoner. Nothing would do the Irish Judges more good than if they were obliged to spend a few weeks in English Courts. Every Judge in Ireland had been a Crown Prosecutor; and a Judge who had gone through a course of Crown prosecuting in Green Street Court House could scarcely believe any man innocent whom he saw in the dock. One of the best Judges on the Irish Bench was the other day led to charge a jury who were convinced of the innocence of a man, accused on the most flimsy evidence of the brutal murder of a woman, to find him guilty of manslaughter if they would not convict him of murder. He contended that cross-examinations, as they were conducted in Ireland by Crown Counsel, would simply leave the case in a worse position than before. Was it reasonable to suppose that with all the best trained intellect of the Irish Bar against a poor wretched prisoner who did not possess 200 words in the whole of his vocabulary the man

would not be broken down in the course of the cross-examination? He (Mr. T. M. Healy) would offer every opposition to this Bill being extended to Ireland. He could imagine it being a good measure under normal circumstances in England; but quite a different condition of things prevailed in Ireland. In England there was no prejudice or bias against a prisoner. It was not the interest of the Crown in England to obtain the conviction of a prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor in Ireland regarded the conviction of a prisoner much in the same way as the Red Indian regarded the addition of a scalp to his belt, and all the talk of the Bar in Ireland was in that sense. He objected especially to this Bill on account of the character of the Resident Magistrates who would have this power of cross-examination and inquisition. The political spirit was at the root of every prosecution in that country, and convictions had to be obtained at all hazards. Personally, he felt so strongly about the measure that he would treat it, if applied to Ireland, in the same spirit as the Coercion Bill of last year. He would devote his days and nights, as far as the Rules would allow him, doing all in his power to defeat it, and he would ask his Colleagues to meet the Bill in a similar spirit. There was great force in the observation of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, that the Bill should be put in operation in England for a few years first in order to see what rules the Judges laid down regarding it. Let them see whether the prisoner was to be allowed to be asked leading questions by his own counsel; and whether the cross-examination was to be generally *ad rem* to a particular crime, of the character, so to say, of that in the Bravo case. Let them see what the practice would be; and then they would be prepared to consider whether a somewhat similar measure might not be applied to Ireland at a future time. If at the present period they applied the Bill to Ireland they would have a feeling created in the country that they were adopting a Coercion Act in disguise; and the entire mind of the people, and the opinion of those who conducted defences on the popular side, would be that the Bill had been introduced for political purposes. Though a similar law to that proposed existed in foreign countries,

Mr. T. M. Healy

there was also at the same time existing the right of appeal. That was a most important matter. And in America, where a prisoner could be called in his own defence, there was an express provision in the Statute of some of the States. He thought he was correct with regard to Massachusetts, at any rate, and he believed, also, with regard to some of the States there was an express provision that if the prisoner abstained from going on the stand—as it was called—and giving evidence, his abstention should not be commented on by the Judge in his Charge to the jury, or by the counsel of the State. The result was a whole series of appeals, the accused having a better chance of justice being done him than in this country. In France the whole machinery of appeal was open to the prisoner. Why, then, did they not bring in a Bill to create a Court of Appeal, instead of bringing forward this insidious measure of piecemeal legislation? He invited working men Members of that House to consider whether there was not some danger in connection with that matter, especially remembering how limited the jury class was, even in this country. In Ireland the case in that respect was far worse. To show the limited class from which special jurors who tried cases in Ireland was drawn, he had obtained a Return which proved that while there were in the County Kerry 20,000 voters, the special jurors did not number 200. There would, under the Bill, be a great chance of the escape of a guilty man, and very little chance for an innocent man. If an ignorant man declined to put himself into competition with learned counsel, he would be taunted with fearing cross-examination. The Bill was another link in the chain of coercion which the Government were weaving in Ireland. He asked English Members not to consider the Amendment which he now begged to move unreasonable. It was—

“That it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in criminal cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power of cross-examining a prisoner deprived of the protection of a jury.”

In the interest of and it was most desirable that graceful crimes which existed,

of Kerry, should be as speedily as possible detected and punished. He himself should be glad if the local population—seeing that the police were unable to check those crimes—would take the matter into its own hands, and by stringent means put a stop to practices of that kind. It was certainly in no sense of shielding criminals that he deprecated the extension of that Bill to Ireland; but he respectfully asked for the consideration of that Amendment the unbiassed opinion of English Gentlemen, whose minds he would ask to be freed from prejudice in dealing with this matter. The Act would lead to the conviction of the innocent. The clever men who were guilty would escape, while the stupid men who were innocent would be convicted.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners deprived of the protection of a jury,"—*(Mr. T. M. Healy,)*

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) said, he thought it was very satisfactory that there had been so much agreement on the part of those who had spoken as to the application of that measure to England and Wales. There had been, so far, no difference of opinion on this point—that it was desirable that the measure should pass with regard to that part of the United Kingdom. He confessed that he was very strongly in favour of the measure; and to his mind it was only astonishing that the present system should have existed so long as it had done. It seemed to him most extraordinary that, for so many years, they should have gone on carefully excluding the evidence of those who knew most about the subject-matter of the case. He was disposed to agree with the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) that it would be desirable either to veto to which modify it to so

power, in certain cases, of compelling the evidence of a prisoner. It would, he thought, be hard, where there was more than one prisoner being tried, if one of the accused was not able to call the other, who might be able to give evidence that would secure his acquittal. He assumed that it was intended to apply the measure to Scotland, and that it did apply; but he should like to ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, respectfully, whether certain modifications would not be necessary, and, perhaps, a new clause required, to render the Bill properly applicable to Scotch criminal procedure? No doubt, the Lord Advocate would give that point his attention. The only other question which remained was whether the Bill should apply to Ireland as well as to England, Scotland, and Wales. If that were a matter which depended only on local considerations, he (Mr. Finlay) should be prepared to act on the opinion which, he understood, was entertained by a great many of the Representatives of Ireland on that point. But, to his mind, that was a matter of general principle; and, speaking for himself, he thought it would be a great mistake if they were to have one law on a matter of that kind for one part of the United Kingdom and another law for another part. The question of what person should be allowed to give evidence was not one to be considered upon local considerations peculiar to Ireland. It was a matter of general principle, and a question on which he thought they ought to be guided by those broad considerations which were applicable to every part of the United Kingdom. He presumed that in Ireland, as in other parts of the Kingdom, it sometimes happened that an innocent man was put on his trial. Was it not desirable that he should be allowed to give his own account of the transaction, and submit that evidence which might secure his acquittal? There might be cases in which the only man who could give evidence necessary to establish his innocence was the prisoner himself; and yet they were told, when it was proposed to apply a measure of that kind to Ireland, that that was coercive legislation. Was that a correct statement? He would call the attention of hon. Members below the Gangway to the fact that the hon.

and learned Member for South Hackney gave one very striking illustration of the evils, as he said, of not allowing prisoners to be called to give evidence. Into the merits of that case he would not enter; but he would remind hon. Members below the Gangway that the Maamtrasna case, selected by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney to illustrate the necessity of such a measure, was a case occurring in Ireland. And yet now it was said that the measure ought not to extend to Ireland. They had heard a good deal from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) in regard to the spirit in which Irish prosecutions were conducted. He was very sorry to hear what the hon. and learned Member said; but, assuming it to be the case that there was that animus for convictions, he would ask the hon. and learned Member whether it was not all the more reasonable to allow a man on his trial to give the evidence which, it might be, was the only means for securing his acquittal? He was strongly of opinion that it would be a mistake if the Government excluded Ireland from the operation of this measure.

Mr. MILVAIN (Durham) said, he could quite realize that if a man charged with a crime was compelled to give evidence in open Court gross injustice might arise, because it very frequently happened that some prisoners were of that nervous temperament that it was impossible for them to do justice to themselves in the witness-box. It would be still worse for such a person to stand in the witness-box without the protection of counsel to defend him; and he could also imagine that if he went into the box without the protection of counsel and was badgered as he had heard witnesses sometimes badgered by counsel his safety might be jeopardized. For that reason, he should object to the compulsory application of the Bill to all prisoners. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) had referred to the question of the application of the Bill to Ireland, and he had been supported in his remarks by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James). He (Mr. Milvain) confessed that he sympathized with the view that the Bill was not, at the present moment, necessary for the

administration of justice in Ireland. He did so, not on account of anything which had been said by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) as to the spirit of the administration of justice in Ireland, nor because he agreed with him in the instance which he quoted of the Judge, who, because the prisoner was not guilty of murder, charged him with manslaughter. Unless the procedure in the Criminal Law in Ireland was very different from the procedure of the same law in England, it would not be within the province of the Judge to charge the prisoner with manslaughter under the circumstances; but it would be in the province of the jury, taking a merciful view of the case, to find a prisoner guilty of manslaughter rather than murder. Nor did he sympathize with the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, because of his threats of obstruction. If this law were necessary for Ireland at the present moment, he should not hesitate for an instant to continue to walk through the Division Lobby again and again, as they had done last year, in order to pass the Bill; but, at the present time, he did not think that the Bill was necessary for the administration of justice in Ireland. He would ask the Government to consider whether, for other reasons than those which had been advanced, the Bill ought to be extended to Ireland? In the first place, they had had an amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland last year; they had this subject then threshed out, and under the Act of last year the prisoner was protected against his evidence taken at the preliminary inquiry being used against him on his trial. If that was done last year, he asked the House whether, if the present Bill were applied to Ireland, it would not constitute an amendment of the Criminal Law (Ireland) Amendment Act as enacted last year? He objected also for this reason. They were told that law and order had become supreme in Ireland. They knew that in Ireland there was jealousy of the administration of the law, rightly or wrongly he did not pretend to say; but, considering that that feeling did exist, he asked the Government to consider whether it was desirable in any sense whatever to increase that feeling by extending to Ire-

Mr. Finlay

land the provisions of this Bill? The examination of prisoners was a subject which he had watched with considerable interest, and he was glad to say that he agreed with the general principle. He therefore supported this Bill, which would also remove the anomaly which existed at the present time. Several instances had been quoted by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) which showed that there were many cases in which the prisoner might give evidence, and many other cases where he was precluded from so doing. He (Mr. Milvain) approved the principle of the Bill, because it got rid of this anomaly, and in that respect it was a legislative step in the right direction. But there was another reason why he agreed with the principle of the Bill, and that was because it corrected an existing evil. As the law existed at present, when the prisoner went into the witness-box to give evidence, he might be asked if he had been previously convicted of any offence. He could give an instance which occurred in his own hearing of a man who was charged with a crime under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The man had been previously charged with a similar offence, and had suffered imprisonment; but after he was discharged from gaol he came into some money—a large sum for him, of about £600—and immediately afterwards a second charge was laid against him. Fortunately, he was defended by counsel, who believed he saw that the charge was the result of a conspiracy to extort money, and was fortunate enough in breaking down the case in cross-examination of the first two witnesses; the man was thereupon discharged with the approbation of the Judge. He would ask the House what would have occurred had that man not been defended by counsel? If the case of conspiracy had not been established before the case for the prosecution was concluded, and the man had been permitted to go into the witness-box to give his testimony, his previous conviction would have been put before the Court, and the jury would not have hesitated a single moment in convicting him. He said that the principle, but not the letter, of this Bill corrected that evil. The Bill said that no person examined under this Act should be examined as to

previous convictions. But might it not be contended rightly by counsel that this Act did not apply to the Acts under which prisoners might now be examined, and that under the Criminal Law Amendment Act questions as to previous conviction might be put to the prisoner? He suggested, with every deference to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, that a clause should be added to the Bill providing that it should not be lawful for any prisoner to be called and examined as a witness otherwise than in accordance with this Act, and that the clauses of previous Acts relating to this matter should thereby be repealed. Subject to that Amendment he agreed with the principle of the Bill, because he believed its effect would be to render more certain the conviction of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent.

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, the Legal Profession in Scotland entirely approved of the principle of the measure. With reference to the Amendment, there could be no doubt that special reasons required to be given why a measure affecting Criminal Law should be applied to Great Britain and not to Ireland. But he thought the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) why the Bill should not be extended to Ireland would appear very satisfactory to the House. The maxim which the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) laid down was a very weighty one—namely, that the Criminal Law of the land should be the same in all parts of the United Kingdom; but coming from his lips it had all the charm of novelty, and must have been a surprise to the House. He (Mr. Crawford) did not, however, make that remark for the sake of fixing upon his hon. and learned Friend the imputation of stating a paradoxical opinion, or following an inconsistent course of action, but in order to point out the reason why this part of the Criminal Law should not be the same in Ireland as in Great Britain was because his hon. and learned Friend and his Friends had succeeded in bringing it about that the main body of the criminal procedure in Ireland was not the same as in the other parts of the Kingdom. He (Mr. Crawford), and those who thought with him, contended that the administration of the

entreat the House to pause before accepting the principle laid down by his right hon. and learned Friend opposite (Sir Henry James). The House must not only look at the narrow point, important as it was, of raising the income of a certain special class. [Sir HENRY JAMES: Maintaining.] It meant raising the income from the amount which would be derived from Consols. There was a much greater principle involved. The suggestion and the Amendment came to this—that new investments and other securities, such as Railway Debentures, were to be placed on the same footing as Government Stock. A precedent had been quoted to show that the concession had already been made, and that railway securities were looked upon as being as sound as land. This was not a question which could be dealt with in a hurry, involving, as it did, the establishment of the principle that Government securities were to be displaced from the position which they had held hitherto, of being confined to a small select number of securities sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, and that a much broader range should be given to investments. The proposal, if adopted, would really strike a blow on what he might call the credit of the State. He would not say it was a matter that ought not to be allowed; but he thought it ought not to be done until it had received the fullest consideration. He suggested that the question should be raised upon Lord Herschell's Bill with regard to the power of trustees. When that Bill came before the House the matter might be thoroughly discussed; but it could not be conveniently dealt with on the present occasion. What he wished to press upon the House was that in attempting to deal with a certain limited number of cases they were really introducing a new principle into the finances of the State, which might be fraught with considerable danger. He was sure that his right hon. Friend opposite would be aware of the force of this objection; because when once they admitted a security, and the security was found to be unsatisfactory, it would be extremely difficult to go back. He had been treated with such singular courtesy and consideration during the whole of the debates on this Bill, and he had found such a spirit of co-operation in all parts of the House, that he was most reluctant to establish

Mr. Goschen

a point of difference with any hon. or right hon. Gentleman; but acting as guardian of the public purse, he could not depart from the principle to which he attached so much force.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the reason given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for resisting the Amendment was that it was undesirable to raise such a broad principle, as this appeared to be, on the last stage of the Bill in that House. He (Mr. Fowler) would, however, point out that the question was very fully discussed before a very strong Select Committee, presided over by Lord Cross, to consider Lord Cairns' Settled Land Act. The principle was then settled that Trustees selling settled land should have power to invest not only in Consols, Government securities, and Court of Chancery, but on the security of bonds, mortgages, or Debentures of Railway Companies which had paid dividends on their ordinary Stock for 10 years. Therefore, the principle involved in the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn had already been settled by the House—namely, that Trustees should have power to invest not only in Government securities, but in Railway Debentures. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the Lord Chancellor and their Legal Advisers, would reconsider the matter, with a view of ascertaining whether, with due regard to the safety of the State, the concession now asked might not be made? He would not ask the right hon. Gentleman to deal with the matter at once; but simply to promise that it should be dealt with in "another place."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to remind the House of the way in which the question arose—the attention of the Government had been prominently called to the matter; and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) not only by representations made inside the House, but by representations made by the general public. The matter had, therefore, been considered; and he hoped and trusted that something might be done in general legislation, if not in connection with the present Bill. They had already agreed to include those securities in which the Court of Chancery allowed trust money to be invested; but

they did not consider that that embraced the larger question which was now raised—namely, securities upon which a high rate of interest was obtained. He trusted that those who were interested in the matter would be satisfied with the assurance he had given. All he could say was that the Government were exceedingly anxious that Trustees should be empowered to invest in other securities, provided that it was consistent with the safe security of the trusts committed to their charge.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, the hon. and learned Attorney General had, he thought, put the matter on the safest footing. He was sorry to say that he was Trustee for so many people that nothing would personally suit him better than some proposal like the present; but, in his opinion, it would be altogether opposed to sound principle. But he was obliged to differ from his right hon. and learned Friend who sat near him. He was afraid that if they gave to Railway Debentures this special character of being on a par with Government securities, it would be impossible to exclude other securities, just as safe; and, even as to railways, looking through the list of securities, it would be found that there were 50 or 60 which would be admitted under this scheme. He quite agreed with the hon. and learned Attorney General and his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the matter was a proper one to consider in connection with the Bill which was coming down from "another place;" but he thought it would be dangerous to do anything now in the direction proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had listened with great pleasure to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Childers); and he hoped the Government would adhere to the course they had marked out for themselves. It was all very well to speak of Railway Debentures; and it might be desirable, when an individual was investing considerable sums of money every year, that he should be able to invest in ordinary Railway Stock; but he did hope that the House would not sanction the proposal of the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Anderson), and place these large and

miscellaneous securities in the same position as Consols.

SIR HENRY JAMES was understood to ask what course the Government would take when the Bill now before "another place" came down? Would the Government give facilities for its full consideration?

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was a Bill in which considerable interest was taken; and he thought it desirable that it should receive the best consideration. Ample opportunities would be afforded for discussing what securities should be authorized; and the list should be examined, with a view of ascertaining whether those which were now sanctioned could be increased with safety. He hoped that his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) would not be disposed to press the Amendment to a Division. He was unable so far to compromise the present position of the Government as to hold out any hope, though, speaking for himself, he would be prepared to place Railway Debentures in the same position as Government securities. He quite admitted that a somewhat extended area might be allowed for investments. No doubt, there would be ample facilities for considering the matter hereafter; but he could not go beyond that.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he hoped the House would permit him to say one word, although he had not heard the whole of the debate. The question of enlarging the power of Trustees was one which undoubtedly deserved consideration, and might be followed up by some practical result; but he demurred to such an enlargement of the Bill as was now proposed. The Bill was a measure to enable the Government to pay off certain holders of Stock, and the holders of the New Three per Cents were entitled to be paid off if they liked. There was no compulsion; but, as a matter of course, they would, if paid off, have their money to invest as they might or could. The holders of any of the Government Stock would be entitled under the Bill either to be paid off, or to remain as they were. That was a transaction which was complete in itself, and it would only embarrass the transaction to give power to invest in other securities. The object of the Bill was clear, and it would be bad policy to go beyond it.

Mr. SPEAKER inquired whether the hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn wished to withdraw the Amendment?

Mr. ANDERSON said, he trusted that he might be allowed to say a word. He had given Notice of the Amendment some time ago, and it had been on the Notice Paper for several days; but owing to the Forms of the House he had not been able to bring it on. Therefore, it could not be said that he had taken the Government by surprise; and he should have been prepared to withdraw the Amendment if some assurance had been given that the principle involved in the Amendment would be accepted. He had entirely failed to hear anything of the kind from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, therefore, he must go to a Division.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question put.

Bill read the third time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill do pass."

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary JACKSON, verbal Amendments made.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that he objected to the course the Government were taking. Amendments had been moved which were alleged to be purely verbal, but of which the House had no means of judging. Instead of taking that course on a Bill of so momentous a character, the Government ought to have re-committed the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: I read the Amendments to the House. I understand this to be a merely verbal Amendment transposing the words and leaving the sense precisely as before.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he would explain that a mere transposition of words had been effected in the clause accepted yesterday. He was exceedingly sorry to have to move the Amendment at so late a stage; but it could not be avoided.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *passed*.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.—[BILL 132.]
(Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews,
Mr. Solicitor General.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that he took no credit to the Government for bringing this measure before the House, as they had enjoyed the advantage of the labours of other men and of previous Governments in previous years. The Bill proposed that prisoners and their wives should be competent but not compellable witnesses; that a man or his wife might give evidence on the man's behalf, but could not be forced to do so. There were, however, certain restrictions in the Bill as to the cross-examination of prisoners. The first great reason for the Bill was that during the last 20 years some 10 or 15 new offences had been created, with regard to which, almost without exception, a prisoner or his wife could give evidence. This was so, for instance, in the Explosives Acts, the Acts relating to conspiracy, the Food and Drugs Acts, the Merchant Shipping Acts—as to sending unseaworthy ships to sea—and notably in the case of the Criminal Law Amendment Act passed in 1885. The result was that the law was in a most anomalous condition. There was a number of offences in regard to which a prisoner could give evidence, and a number of kindred offences in which he could not give evidence. He had been furnished by members of both branches of the Legal Profession with extraordinary instances of the unjust operation of the present Law of Evidence. There was a prosecution at the Old Bailey, and two prisoners were indicted. It was desirable to prove their presence in another place at the time. One prisoner was married, and the other kept a mistress, and the latter was allowed to give the evidence which the lawful wife was debarred from giving. A man could be examined as to whether he had forged a trade mark; but he could not be examined on the charge of forging a cheque. Under the Criminal Law Amendment Act a man was permitted to be a witness, and might prove his own innocence; but if charged with precisely analogous

offences coming under the pre-existing law his mouth would be closed. It might be asked whether the changes already made in the direction of the Bill had proved to be satisfactory. He had communicated with a number of the Judges to ascertain their opinion on the question whether the new law on this subject worked well. They had many years' experience of it, and during the last three years hundreds of cases had occurred under the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and the unanimous testimony of both Bench and Bar was that it had the effect of allowing innocent men in several instances to get off, and causing guilty men to be convicted. He could, for instance, give several cases in which the evidence of children under the Act just referred to could only be rebutted by the statement of the man charged; and it had been on his statement, and the way in which he had given evidence, that an acquittal had been obtained, which could not otherwise have been obtained. All would admit that the first object to be attained was that the innocent should not suffer; and that it would be better for several guilty persons to escape than that one innocent man should be convicted. Mr. Justice Stephen had expressed himself strongly on the absurd state of a law by which a man charged with personating a voter could be examined, but not a man charged with personation and attempt to defraud; and a man could be examined with respect to the sending of an unseaworthy ship to sea, but not on a charge of manslaughter by negligence in so doing. But the Parliamentary history of the question was enough to justify the Bill. Efforts had been made for more than 20 years to change the law in this direction. The first Bill on the question was brought forward by two Irish Members—and he commended this fact to hon. Members below the Gangway—Mr. Scully and Mr. MacMahon. From that time to 1878 constant attempts of the same kind were made, and in 1879 the Report of the Criminal Law Commission was published. In 1883, before the Grand Committee on Law, the matter was fully investigated, with the result that a Bill was introduced in 1884 by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Derby (Sir William Harcourt), and Lord Herschell, the then Solicitor General. On the lines of that Bill the present measure proceeded. The Bill had passed the House of Lords three or four times; and he would remind those who had studied the speeches of the great lawyers in the past of the unanimity there had always been amongst them on this question. He believed this Bill had the assent of the lawyers, and of every hon. Member who had considered the question from a practical point of view. No one, he thought, could deny that there was an urgent demand for this Bill. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) was recently defending a man who was indicted for shooting another under very curious circumstances. On that occasion his hon. and learned Friend expressed his hope that the present Bill might become law; and Mr. Justice Stephen, concurring in this view, urged his hon. and learned Friend to do what he could to press forward this much-needed change in the law. The proposals he had submitted would tend to elicit the truth, would conduce to the ends of justice, would lead to innocent men being acquitted, and would bring out the truth in the case of guilty men. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.) said, that this was not the first time that this Bill had been before the House, and that he had expressed the opinion, formed after considerable thought and experience, in favour of it. There were two considerations which made it perfectly clear that the law could not be allowed to remain as it now was. The first of these was that the law as it now stood was utterly inconsistent, inasmuch as in one set of cases the person accused was allowed to give evidence on his own behalf, and another set in which he was prohibited from doing so. This Bill, also, was justifiable on a very broad and sound principle—that the rule of law which incapacitated an accused person from giving evidence on his own behalf had the effect of excluding the evidence of the person who knew most of the transaction in question. He did

not hesitate to say that, upon his present information and judgment, he should be prepared to go even further than this Bill proposed to go, and to make the party accused not only a competent, but in some cases, at least, a compellable witness. He would ask the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) whether he did not think there was, at least, one case in which a prisoner should be a compellable witness? That was the case of four or five persons jointly charged with an offence, against three or four of whom there might be cogent evidence, but as to the fifth there might be some evidence, but not of a cogent kind. As the law now stood, the fifth man might be convicted; but if he were enabled to call the men beside him in the dock, they would be compelled to say that he was not present at the commission of the crime. In the *Maamtrasna* case, many hon. Members—not only those from Ireland—felt very uneasy in their minds with regard to one of the accused persons who was hanged. He knew that the Solicitor General, the Under Secretary of State for India, and he himself, took great pains to investigate the case; and they all three came to the conclusion that there was strong reason for doubting whether one man who was found guilty of murder with the rest, and suffered for it, was guilty of or took an active part in the crime. Could that man have called his fellow-prisoners and his wife as witnesses, it would, in all probability, have saved him from death. The law ought not to be directed towards the protection of the guilty, or to extend to them even an artificial protection; and he was prepared to go beyond what the Bill proposed in the matter of examining accused persons. There was one point that he should like to ask the Attorney General, whether he thought it necessary to insist upon doing what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) did not insist upon doing—extend the operation of the Bill to Ireland? In the interest of the Bill itself, which, after all, was a new departure in our judicial system, it would be better to see how it operated in England before extending it to Ireland, where, whether rightly or wrongly, under the existing system, a widespread distrust of the administration of the law was unquestion-

Sir Charles Russell

ably felt. He would relate a little incident to illustrate that feeling. During the trials of the dynamitards at the Old Bailey, before Judge Hawkins, a few years ago, a friend of his, a respectable Presbyterian minister, from the North of Ireland, was desirous of hearing the trials, and he (Sir Charles Russell) obtained him a pass to the Court. Subsequently the clergyman called on him at his chambers, and said—

"I was never more astonished in the whole course of my life! Why, a criminal trial in the Old Bailey is not like what I am accustomed to see in Ireland. The prosecuting counsel and the Judge were most anxious that nothing unfair to the prisoners should be mentioned, while in Ireland it is a scramble on the part of those who represent the Crown to secure a conviction."

He did not wish it to be thought that, in giving this illustration, he intended to infer that the Judges, or others who were entrusted with the administration of the law in Ireland, were intentionally or consciously unfair; but he knew that there was a very considerable feeling against legal administration, which would, he feared, be intensified if the Bill were applied to Ireland.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, that he also was very desirous to see the Bill passed, and would join in the appeal of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster). Everybody who knew anything about the administration of the Criminal Law knew how badly this measure was wanted in the interests of justice and mercy. It was wanted for the purpose of obtaining the exoneration of innocent men, as well as for deciding upon the degrees of guilt, for it affected not only the verdict, but the sentence. They had had experience of the Bill in many directions; and many a man who had been prosecuted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act would now be undergoing penal servitude but for the right which he had to give evidence on his own behalf. If a justly accused prisoner gave his own version of the affair for which he had been arrested, the Judge, from merely hearing his evidence, could form an idea as to how far he was implicated, and might possibly mitigate some of the terribly severe sentences now inflicted. At present the Judge heard but one side of the story of brutality, cruelty, and false conduct. With regard to the inclusion of Ireland, he consented in

1883 to exclude Ireland from its operation, because he believed that it would be well to do so until they had had some experience of its working in this country. After some experience of its working in England, he thought it might be applied to Ireland; but as it was well known that the Irish Representatives were at present strongly opposed to it, he hoped the Government would not insist upon forcing it upon an unwilling people. He might remind the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite of the saying that the greatest enemy to the good was the best.

Mr. WHARTON (York, W. R., Ripon) said, he believed that this Bill, which he hoped would pass into law, was one that would greatly assist in their duty those who had the administration of the Criminal Law, and also secure to those who were wrongly accused of crime greater facility for establishing their innocence. But there were three points to which he wished to refer. First, he read in the Bill that a person charged with an offence might be called as a witness, and, he asked, who was to call the prisoner? Was he to be called by the prosecuting counsel, the defending counsel, or by the Court itself? It seemed to him that on the Committee stage of the Bill it would be wise if some words were inserted more clearly to specify by whom the prisoner might be called. Secondly, with reference to the inquiry before the Grand Jury, the Bill said that the prisoner should not be called before the Grand Jury. He had always felt it to be a very anomalous condition of things that they should have an inquiry involving a charge against a prisoner entirely conducted in his absence; and he now thought that when they were dealing with a Bill of the kind it was worthy of their consideration whether this practice should be retained. His third question was, would the calling of the prisoner, without further evidence on his behalf, entitle the counsel for the prosecution to reply? He could not help thinking, if that were so, that this power of calling the prisoner might become something in the nature of a trap. It might be looked on as a trap if the counsel for the prosecution was to have the right of making a long statement the statement which an unclear man might make. As

the Bill would pass, because he believed it would be the means of securing the acquittal of innocent persons; and if it tended to the conviction of the guilty, so much the better.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.), in rising to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, said, he desired to express his acknowledgments for what had fallen from the two hon. and learned Gentlemen (Sir Charles Russell and Sir Henry James) with regard to the application of the Bill to Ireland. If the Bill were to be applied under normal conditions he should offer no opposition to it. At present, however, the power to examine a prisoner and his witnesses as well existed in Ireland, and was frequently used in a manner most detrimental to the interests of the accused. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), however, was wrong as to the grievance complained of in the Maamtrasna case. The grievance was that Myles Joyce was not allowed to have his wife examined in his defence. He wished to know whether this measure, like the Coercion Bill, was going to be forced down the throats of the Irish people? The atmosphere of an Irish Court was totally different from that of an English Court of Justice, inasmuch as in the former every effort was made to insure the conviction of a prisoner. Nothing would do the Irish Judges more good than if they were obliged to spend a few weeks in English Courts. Every Judge in Ireland had been a Crown Prosecutor; and a Judge who had gone through a course of Crown prosecuting in Green Street Court House could scarcely believe any man innocent whom he saw in the dock. One of the best Judges on the Irish Bench was the other day led to charge a jury who were convinced of the innocence of a man, accused on the most flimsy evidence of the brutal murder of a woman, to find him guilty of manslaughter if they would not convict him of murder. He contended that cross-examinations, as they were conducted in Ireland by Crown Counsel, would simply leave the case in a worse position than before. Was it reasonable to suppose that with all the best trained intellect of the Irish Bar against a poor wretched prisoner who did not possess 200 words in the whole of his vocabulary the man

would not be broken down in the course of the cross-examination? He (Mr. T. M. Healy) would offer every opposition to this Bill being extended to Ireland. He could imagine it being a good measure under normal circumstances in England; but quite a different condition of things prevailed in Ireland. In England there was no prejudice or bias against a prisoner. It was not the interest of the Crown in England to obtain the conviction of a prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor in Ireland regarded the conviction of a prisoner much in the same way as the Red Indian regarded the addition of a scalp to his belt, and all the talk of the Bar in Ireland was in that sense. He objected especially to this Bill on account of the character of the Resident Magistrates who would have this power of cross-examination and inquisition. The political spirit was at the root of every prosecution in that country, and convictions had to be obtained at all hazards. Personally, he felt so strongly about the measure that he would treat it, if applied to Ireland, in the same spirit as the Coercion Bill of last year. He would devote his days and nights, as far as the Rules would allow him, doing all in his power to defeat it, and he would ask his Colleagues to meet the Bill in a similar spirit. There was great force in the observation of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, that the Bill should be put in operation in England for a few years first in order to see what rules the Judges laid down regarding it. Let them see whether the prisoner was to be allowed to be asked leading questions by his own counsel; and whether the cross-examination was to be generally *ad rem* to a particular crime, of the character, so to say, of that in the Bravo case. Let them see what the practice would be; and then they would be prepared to consider whether a somewhat similar measure might not be applied to Ireland at a future time. If at the present period they applied the Bill to Ireland they would have a feeling created in the country that they were adopting a Coercion Act in disguise; and the entire mind of the people, and the opinion of those who conducted defences on the popular side, would be that the Bill had been introduced for political purposes. Though a similar law to that proposed existed in foreign countries,

Mr. T. M. Healy

there was also at the same time existing the right of appeal. That was a most important matter. And in America, where a prisoner could be called in his own defence, there was an express provision in the Statute of some of the States. He thought he was correct with regard to Massachusetts, at any rate, and he believed, also, with regard to some of the States there was an express provision that if the prisoner abstained from going on the stand—as it was called—and giving evidence, his abstention should not be commented on by the Judge in his Charge to the jury, or by the counsel of the State. The result was a whole series of appeals, the accused having a better chance of justice being done him than in this country. In France the whole machinery of appeal was open to the prisoner. Why, then, did they not bring in a Bill to create a Court of Appeal, instead of bringing forward this insidious measure of piecemeal legislation? He invited working men Members of that House to consider whether there was not some danger in connection with that matter, especially remembering how limited the jury class was, even in this country. In Ireland the case in that respect was far worse. To show the limited class from which special jurors who tried cases in Ireland was drawn, he had obtained a Return which proved that while there were in the County Kerry 20,000 voters, the special jurors did not number 200. There would, under the Bill, be a great chance of the escape of a guilty man, and very little chance for an innocent man. If an ignorant man declined to put himself into competition with learned counsel, he would be taunted with fearing cross-examination. The Bill was another link in the chain of coercion which the Government were weaving in Ireland. He asked English Members not to consider the Amendment which he now begged to move unreasonable. It was—

“That it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in criminal cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power of cross-examining a prisoner deprived of the protection of a jury.”

In the interests of Ireland it was most desirable that the disgraceful crimes which existed, especially in the County

of Kerry, should be as speedily as possible detected and punished. He himself should be glad if the local population—seeing that the police were unable to check those crimes—would take the matter into its own hands, and by stringent means put a stop to practices of that kind. It was certainly in no sense of shielding criminals that he deprecated the extension of that Bill to Ireland; but he respectfully asked for the consideration of that Amendment the unbiassed opinion of English Gentlemen, whose minds he would ask to be freed from prejudice in dealing with this matter. The Act would lead to the conviction of the innocent. The clever men who were guilty would escape, while the stupid men who were innocent would be convicted.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make any further change in the Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in Criminal Cases is established, and that this House is not prepared to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on removable magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners deprived of the protection of a jury,"—*(Mr. T. M. Healy,)*

--instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) said, he thought it was very satisfactory that there had been so much agreement on the part of those who had spoken as to the application of that measure to England and Wales. There had been, so far, no difference of opinion on this point—that it was desirable that the measure should pass with regard to that part of the United Kingdom. He confessed that he was very strongly in favour of the measure; and to his mind it was only astonishing that the present system should have existed so long as it had done. It seemed to him most extraordinary that, for so many years, they should have gone on carefully excluding the evidence of those who knew most about the subject-matter of the case. He was disposed to agree with the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) that it would be desirable either to omit altogether the Provision to which he had referred, or to modify it to such an extent as to give the

power, in certain cases, of compelling the evidence of a prisoner. It would, he thought, be hard, where there was more than one prisoner being tried, if one of the accused was not able to call the other, who might be able to give evidence that would secure his acquittal. He assumed that it was intended to apply the measure to Scotland, and that it did apply; but he should like to ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, respectfully, whether certain modifications would not be necessary, and, perhaps, a new clause required, to render the Bill properly applicable to Scotch criminal procedure? No doubt, the Lord Advocate would give that point his attention. The only other question which remained was whether the Bill should apply to Ireland as well as to England, Scotland, and Wales. If that were a matter which depended only on local considerations, he (Mr. Finlay) should be prepared to act on the opinion which, he understood, was entertained by a great many of the Representatives of Ireland on that point. But, to his mind, that was a matter of general principle; and, speaking for himself, he thought it would be a great mistake if they were to have one law on a matter of that kind for one part of the United Kingdom and another law for another part. The question of what person should be allowed to give evidence was not one to be considered upon local considerations peculiar to Ireland. It was a matter of general principle, and a question on which he thought they ought to be guided by those broad considerations which were applicable to every part of the United Kingdom. He presumed that in Ireland, as in other parts of the Kingdom, it sometimes happened that an innocent man was put on his trial. Was it not desirable that he should be allowed to give his own account of the transaction, and submit that evidence which might secure his acquittal? There might be cases in which the only man who could give evidence necessary to establish his innocence was the prisoner himself; and yet they were told, when it was proposed to apply a measure of that kind to Ireland, that that was coercive legislation. Was that a correct statement? He would call the attention of hon. Members below the Gangway to the fact that the hon.

and learned Member for South Hackney gave one very striking illustration of the evils, as he said, of not allowing prisoners to be called to give evidence. Into the merits of that case he would not enter; but he would remind hon. Members below the Gangway that the Maamtrasna case, selected by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney to illustrate the necessity of such a measure, was a case occurring in Ireland. And yet now it was said that the measure ought not to extend to Ireland. They had heard a good deal from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) in regard to the spirit in which Irish prosecutions were conducted. He was very sorry to hear what the hon. and learned Member said; but, assuming it to be the case that there was that animus for convictions, he would ask the hon. and learned Member whether it was not all the more reasonable to allow a man on his trial to give the evidence which, it might be, was the only means for securing his acquittal? He was strongly of opinion that it would be a mistake if the Government excluded Ireland from the operation of this measure.

Mr. MILVAIN (Durham) said, he could quite realize that if a man charged with a crime was compelled to give evidence in open Court gross injustice might arise, because it very frequently happened that some prisoners were of that nervous temperament that it was impossible for them to do justice to themselves in the witness-box. It would be still worse for such a person to stand in the witness-box without the protection of counsel to defend him; and he could also imagine that if he went into the box without the protection of counsel and was badgered as he had heard witnesses sometimes badgered by counsel his safety might be jeopardized. For that reason, he should object to the compulsory application of the Bill to all prisoners. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) had referred to the question of the application of the Bill to Ireland, and he had been supported in his remarks by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James). He (Mr. Milvain) confessed that he sympathized with the view that the Bill was not, at the present moment, necessary for the

administration of justice in Ireland. He did so, not on account of anything which had been said by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) as to the spirit of the administration of justice in Ireland, nor because he agreed with him in the instance which he quoted of the Judge, who, because the prisoner was not guilty of murder, charged him with manslaughter. Unless the procedure in the Criminal Law in Ireland was very different from the procedure of the same law in England, it would not be within the province of the Judge to charge the prisoner with manslaughter under the circumstances; but it would be in the province of the jury, taking a merciful view of the case, to find a prisoner guilty of manslaughter rather than murder. Nor did he sympathize with the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, because of his threats of obstruction. If this law were necessary for Ireland at the present moment, he should not hesitate for an instant to continue to walk through the Division Lobby again and again, as they had done last year, in order to pass the Bill; but, at the present time, he did not think that the Bill was necessary for the administration of justice in Ireland. He would ask the Government to consider whether, for other reasons than those which had been advanced, the Bill ought to be extended to Ireland? In the first place, they had had an amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland last year; they had this subject then threshed out, and under the Act of last year the prisoner was protected against his evidence taken at the preliminary inquiry being used against him on his trial. If that was done last year, he asked the House whether, if the present Bill were applied to Ireland, it would not constitute an amendment of the Criminal Law (Ireland) Amendment Act as enacted last year? He objected also for this reason. They were told that law and order had become supreme in Ireland. They knew that in Ireland there was jealousy of the administration of the law, rightly or wrongly he did not pretend to say; but, considering that that feeling did exist, he asked the Government to consider whether it was desirable in any sense whatever to increase that feeling by extending to Ire-

Mr. Finlay

land the provisions of this Bill? The examination of prisoners was a subject which he had watched with considerable interest, and he was glad to say that he agreed with the general principle. He therefore supported this Bill, which would also remove the anomaly which existed at the present time. Several instances had been quoted by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) which showed that there were many cases in which the prisoner might give evidence, and many other cases where he was precluded from so doing. He (Mr. Milvain) approved the principle of the Bill, because it got rid of this anomaly, and in that respect it was a legislative step in the right direction. But there was another reason why he agreed with the principle of the Bill, and that was because it corrected an existing evil. As the law existed at present, when the prisoner went into the witness-box to give evidence, he might be asked if he had been previously convicted of any offence. He could give an instance which occurred in his own hearing of a man who was charged with a crime under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. The man had been previously charged with a similar offence, and had suffered imprisonment; but after he was discharged from gaol he came into some money—a large sum for him, of about £600—and immediately afterwards a second charge was laid against him. Fortunately, he was defended by counsel, who believed he saw that the charge was the result of a conspiracy to extort money, and was fortunate enough in breaking down the case in cross-examination of the first two witnesses; the man was thereupon discharged with the approbation of the Judge. He would ask the House what would have occurred had that man not been defended by counsel? If the case of conspiracy had not been established before the case for the prosecution was concluded, and the man had been permitted to go into the witness-box to give his testimony, his previous conviction would have been put before the Court, and the jury would not have hesitated a single moment in convicting him. He said that the principle, but not the letter, of this Bill corrected that evil. The Bill said that no person examined under this Act should be examined as to

previous convictions. But might it not be contended rightly by counsel that this Act did not apply to the Acts under which prisoners might now be examined, and that under the Criminal Law Amendment Act questions as to previous conviction might be put to the prisoner? He suggested, with every deference to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, that a clause should be added to the Bill providing that it should not be lawful for any prisoner to be called and examined as a witness otherwise than in accordance with this Act, and that the clauses of previous Acts relating to this matter should thereby be repealed. Subject to that Amendment he agreed with the principle of the Bill, because he believed its effect would be to render more certain the conviction of the guilty and the acquittal of the innocent.

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, the Legal Profession in Scotland entirely approved of the principle of the measure. With reference to the Amendment, there could be no doubt that special reasons required to be given why a measure affecting Criminal Law should be applied to Great Britain and not to Ireland. But he thought the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) why the Bill should not be extended to Ireland would appear very satisfactory to the House. The maxim which the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) laid down was a very weighty one—namely, that the Criminal Law of the land should be the same in all parts of the United Kingdom; but coming from his lips it had all the charm of novelty, and must have been a surprise to the House. He (Mr. Crawford) did not, however, make that remark for the sake of fixing upon his hon. and learned Friend the imputation of stating a paradoxical opinion, or following an inconsistent course of action, but in order to point out the reason why this part of the Criminal Law should not be the same in Ireland as in Great Britain was because his hon. and learned Friend and his Friends had succeeded in bringing it about that the main body of the criminal procedure in Ireland was not the same as in the other parts of the Kingdom. He (Mr. Crawford), and those who thought with him, contended that the administration of the

Criminal Law in Ireland partook of the nature of an inquisition; that a prisoner was not safe; that he was not protected or sure of obtaining fair play; that the law was not in itself in conformity with the opinions and the feelings of the people, and, therefore, was not administered in a way which they considered fair and just; and, so long as that state of things continued, he thought the Irish should not be deprived of what they felt to be a real protection. It would be a harsh, arbitrary, unjust, and unwise thing if the opinion of the Irish Members was not allowed to prevail on this question. But his principal object in rising was to express the acknowledgment that the Bill, so far as Scotland and England were concerned, was a welcome improvement of the Criminal Law. The subject was not new to them. It was many years since the Faculty of Advocates, of which he was a member, affirmed the principle of the Bill when it was first brought in by a private Member, and the feeling in favour of it had steadily grown. They had always in Scotland had some experience of the principle of consideration being given to the evidence of a prisoner. When the prisoner was apprehended, he had the opportunity of making a statement; and if he did so, his statement formed a necessary portion of the criminal proceedings. It was true that, technically, it could only be used as evidence against him, and not for him; but its production had hardly ever been refused by the prosecution, and had often been a safeguard of the innocent. Accordingly, their experience had led Scottish lawyers and the Scottish public to the opinion that the extension of the principle would be a beneficial thing. At the same time, there were certain details in which the measure might, with advantage, be better adjusted to the wants of Scotland. He was sure his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate would give due consideration to them, and that in Committee the necessary corrections would be made.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, he found some difficulty in this matter, because he was thoroughly in favour of the Bill as it stood. He opposed the Bill when it was brought in by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James)

in 1886, because he thought there was not then sufficient protection for ignorant prisoners, especially in cases of poaching offences and trade disputes; and to meet the objection he then raised, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman admitted had some force, and which would then have been dealt with had it been possible at that period of the Session, a clause had been added which protected that class of prisoners. It was because he believed the Bill to be in its present condition an exceedingly valuable one, and one which might be of enormous benefit to prisoners in the country, that he appealed to the Government—he did not know that any kind of appeal could have weight after the appeal made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell), and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Durham (Mr. Milvain)—he appealed to the Government in the interest of the Bill itself not to include Ireland in it, and he trusted to give satisfactory reasons in support of that appeal. It was said by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) that the Bill dealt with a general principle, and that it ought, therefore, to apply generally to the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. That would be an effective argument if legislation had always been conducted on that basis; but it had not been. On many matters of general principle they had excepted one or the other country. He always thought that unfortunate; he always thought that of itself gave some colour to the claim that there should be separate Legislatures dealing with the separate countries; but he was bound to say that they had exceptional circumstances here which did justify at present the appeal to exempt Ireland from this Act. He did not quite understand the point urged by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness as to one defendant not having given to him the right to call other defendants included in the same indictment.

MR. FINLAY said, that he simply endorsed what his hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Hackney said upon that point.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, at the present moment the law of England cer-

Mr. Donald Crawford

tainly, and he thought the law of the other countries also, was that so long as the whole of the defendants were not given in charge to the jury, any one of the defendants might apply to be tried separately, and might ground his application on the fact that he wanted to call his co-defendants as witnesses, and he had the right to do that, and, as far as his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) knowledge went, the Court would always accede to that request. Therefore, he did not understand the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness. If this Bill were passed in its present form, he understood that a prisoner would have the right to tender himself as a witness, or to tender his wife as a witness, on his behalf, or the prosecution or any co-prisoner would equally have the right to call him as a witness with this reservation, that the prisoner and his wife would have the right to refuse in the event of their thinking it would be right to do so. There was one point raised which he thought would be worthy of very serious consideration when they got into Committee, and that was the point that neither the Judge nor the counsel for the prosecution ought to have the right to comment hostilely upon the abstinence of the prisoner from going into the witness-box. The matter ought not to be dealt with as it would be in a civil case. He had reason to remember a case in which three persons were indicted together; one of them applied to be tried separately, and the counsel for the prosecution in that case said he should comment upon the fact, in the event of their not being put in the box, of the other prisoners not being called by the one who would be tried separately. In that case the prisoner put the others in the box, and said nothing to them, except to ask them their names, thus relieving himself from the risk of hostile comment on account of not calling them; but it was not every prisoner tried by himself who had sufficient knowledge of what was in his power to do. A man would not care to render himself open to the unfair position in which he might be placed, and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought there ought to be in Committee an addition made to the Bill to the effect that there should not be any hostile comment either by the prosecuting counsel, or by the Judge, or by any advocate for any other prisoner charged

upon the fact that the prisoner or his wife had refused to exercise their right of going into the box. It would be a mistake to leave them the right of refusal if the exercise of it was to weigh against them as though it were a matter of guilt. Now, having dealt with that point, and expressed his hope that this Bill might become law for England, Wales, and Scotland, he ventured to say a word upon the appeal made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). As he understood him, the hon. and learned Member agreed with the principle of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member agreed that wives should have the choice of being called, and he agreed that prisoners also should have that choice, if it were not as he alleged—and he (Mr. Bradlaugh) thought with good grounds—that an exceptional state of things existed in Ireland. He would not discuss how that exceptional state of things had originated which would make the examination of prisoners as witnesses absolutely unfair. One of the hon. and learned Gentleman's grounds of objection was that the magistrates before whom the people must often come in the cases he had in mind were magistrates not of the ordinary character, but removable magistrates, tempted to act rather as partizans than as Judges, and as advocates for the prosecution rather than as persons seeking for the truth. There did seem to him to be real and material objection in that, and it was put very fairly to the House by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Durham that if they extended this Bill to Ireland now they would really override what the Government themselves consented to last year having an overwhelming majority at their disposal, when they exempted prisoners from having their examinations brought up against them as evidence in their trial. The objection which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) made to the Bill had been fairly and fully met, and it was because he did not desire that he should be driven into voting, as he must vote, for the Amendment, which he did not like—it was that he should not be driven into voting for an Amendment which, if carried, would be fatal to the whole of the Bill, that he asked the Government to take into consideration the appeal which had no

Party character. It was an appeal made to them from their own side, an appeal made to them by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury, who certainly had this Bill at heart, and who, to his (Mr. Bradlaugh's) knowledge, took great pains with it in previous Sessions when it was in his hands; and it was an appeal which he (Mr. Bradlaugh) made in no antagonism to the Government at all, but because he believed that the Bill might be risked in passing, if the wishes of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford were not acceded to, wishes which were very justly founded upon the way in which justice was administered in Ireland. He was sorry to hear the hon. and learned Member for North Longford say there was prejudice in this country against the poor on trial. He did not think such a prejudice existed; it was true that in some trade disputes, and it was true that in some poaching offences, they did get what he might call a Party administration of justice; but outside such cases, and they were very exceptional, he did not think there was any excuse for saying that the Criminal Law in this country was pressed more harshly against the poor than against the rich, or that it was pressed more harshly against the unpopular man than it was against the popular man. He deemed it right to say that. He could quite understand the hon. and learned Member for North Longford saying what he did, considering his unfortunate experience of the administration—it was hardly fair to call it justice—of the law in his own country. No doubt the hon. and learned Member thought that what obtained in Ireland obtained in England also, but it did not. He would not trouble the House with any further remarks upon the point. He did not quite understand what the hon. and learned Member for Durham meant by the compulsory provisions of the Bill, for there were no compulsory provisions. There was great power of ascertaining the evidence given; but the prisoner was told—and by the clause the hon. and learned Attorney General had inserted, which met entirely the objection he (Mr. Bradlaugh) raised for two years to this Bill—the prisoner was told “you have the right to refuse.” It was only needed that there should be in Committee inserted in the Bill some

Mr. Bradlaugh

provision that the refusal of a prisoner to give evidence should not be commented upon against him. If that were done he did not see a shadow of unfairness in the Bill at all, and he ventured, in sitting down, to ask the Government to exempt Ireland from the operation of the Bill, which would then pass practically as an unopposed measure. All Members concurred in wishing to make the Bill law, and all would like to see it extended to Ireland when a better state of things came about, and when its administration would not be associated with exceptional legislation which was rightly regarded as coercive.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, that in the few observations which he desired to lay before the House he would confine himself to the duty or expediency of including Ireland within the scope of the measure. There had been absolute unanimity in favour of its principle, and he submitted that its character in connection with the administration of justice and the admissibility of evidence made it *prima facie* to apply equally to every portion of the United Kingdom. Suppose the Bill, if passed into law, were not to apply to Ireland, how extraordinary the position would be? If a man happened to be accused of a crime in England, everyone was agreed that it would be for his protection, if innocent, that he should be able to give his own version of the story. The same man could not give his version of the story if accused in Ireland. What shadow of excuse could there be for limiting the measure in that way? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) and others urged their appeal to the interest of the Bill. But the question to be considered was the interests of the administration of justice in Ireland. He looked upon this measure as a remedial measure, and, therefore, he thought it should be extended to Ireland. It would be very easy to take hold of this Bill as a convenient peg on which to hang a denunciation of the administration of the law in Ireland. It had been stated to the House that there existed in Ireland a widespread feeling of distrust with reference to the administration of justice in Ireland. It had been also stated that Irish Judges were inclined to lean rather more heavily

against an accused person than were English Judges. He did not now intend to enter into a defence of the Irish Judges, but he altogether denied that statement. A certain portion of the administration of justice was now entrusted to what had been called "removable" magistrates; but a certain portion of the law was administered the same way in England.

MR. T. M. HEALY: They have the right of appeal always.

MR. MADDEN: But if there was a small portion of the law administered in this way, were they to legislate for that special portion? It occurred to him that if the arguments of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) were examined they tended to show that there was all the more necessity for the extension of this Bill to Ireland. If Judges were unfair this Bill was all the more wanted, because everyone who had spoken had admitted that the Bill would be a protection to an innocent man who found himself in the dock. If the hon. and learned Member agreed that that was the case, and at the same time argued that the innocent man in Ireland was exposed to peril on account of the unfairness of the Judges, he thought the argument led to the opposite conclusion. If they were going to improve the method of taking evidence under the criminal system, surely they ought to improve it throughout the entire Kingdom, and for the benefit of every class. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford said that—

"It is inexpedient to make any further changes in Criminal Law until a Court of Appeal in criminal cases has been established."

No doubt, the question of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal was a question of the very greatest importance. But what was the force of the argument which had been deduced in favour of the establishment of such a Court? It was that miscarriages of justice might occur in the trial of a case before a jury. But was this Bill a Bill to improve the mode of conducting trials, or was it not? If it was not, what was the meaning of this consensus of opinion in its favour? If it was, how could it be said that the chances of miscarriage were not diminished? In conclusion, he ventured to hope that the House would come to the decision that

this measure was an efficient measure, and one which was in favour of a class which, above all others, the House was bound to consider.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he was sorry to have to trouble the House a second time, but as an Amendment had been moved which narrowed the question before the House he wished to make a few further observations. Of course, all would appreciate the fact that the Bill before the House would give an advantage to innocent persons; but it was necessary to look to the circumstances in which that opportunity was given, and practical reasons and difficulties occurred to his mind why he thought that it might be that a different effect would be given to that opportunity in Ireland than would be given in England. He had hoped the Government would have given way to the appeal made by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) and himself, and have excluded Ireland from the operation of the Bill. He would not go into the question of the administration of justice in Ireland, but did not think it was possible to assert that the conduct of criminal cases in Ireland was exactly the same as it was in England. Anyone who had watched the conduct of criminal cases in England would know that no prosecuting counsel ever thought of exercising any ingenuity to secure a conviction. The Judge was always careful that no prosecuting counsel should for a moment exceed the line of his duty. He hoped and believed that was the state of things in Ireland; but he was not quite sure that in some class of cases there would not be an acuter phase of forensic rivalry than would be displayed in this country, so that the efficacious principle might not be the same in Ireland as in England. But then there was the question of a prisoner who did not wish to be called. English prisoners, he was sure, as a rule, would regard this Bill as a beneficent and merciful measure in their favour, and would in most cases wish to be examined on their trial. But they must take Ireland as it was. They must take the opinion in Ireland as it was, and they must take into consideration the opinions of the Representatives of the Irish people as they were. Although he thought they would be teaching the

Irish people wrongly, yet they would teach the Irish people that this was a hostile measure; and if they did that, might it not be that the Irish criminal would take up an attitude of dogged hostility to this measure, and refuse to go into the witness-box? If that should prove to be the case a position would be taken up by the Irish prisoner which would defeat the very object of the Bill. He would remind the Government that those who were united in their efforts to maintain the Imperial Parliament constantly stated that they were willing to listen to the opinions of Irish Members, and, in matters solely affecting Ireland, to give to those opinions their due weight, having regard to their being based on local knowledge. The Bill would only succeed if it were regarded as a beneficent Bill; and if it were regarded as a measure establishing a tyrannical inquisitorial power it would not be a good Bill. He therefore appealed to the Government to accede to the Amendment, and allow the Bill to come into operation in England without further delay. When experience had manifested the beneficial operation of this change in the law, a desire for its extension to Ireland would, no doubt, soon arise in that country.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth) said, he was very glad that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had had an opportunity of addressing the House again, and of developing what he called the arguments in favour of this Amendment. The fact that the right hon. Gentleman had made an appeal to the Government in favour of the Amendment was a matter of importance, having regard to the right hon. Gentleman's previous connection with this Bill. His words were entitled to be considered; but they, in effect, amounted to a most amazing argument. The right hon. Gentleman was strongly in favour of the principle of a prisoner being allowed to give evidence in his own defence, yet, though he could point out no distinction in principle between Ireland and England, he now urged the House to withhold this beneficent Bill—to use his own term—from Ireland. His argument was that it ought not to be extended to Ireland, because the Irish Members were against it. If the right

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hon. Gentleman believed that this change in the Law of Evidence would make the administration of the Criminal Law more fair and just, there was no reason for not extending it to Ireland, save that which was based on the alleged partiality of Irish Judges, which was a ground disavowed by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Hackney (Sir Charles Russell) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had appealed to the Government not to extend the Bill to Ireland; but the only real argument that had been adduced in support of such a course was that it would be more easy to pass the Bill if this Amendment were agreed to. That argument had great force with him, for before he entered the House he had pledged himself to do all he could to have the law amended as the Bill proposed to amend it; and he was most anxious to see it placed upon the Statute Book, even if it only extended to England. But this was not the end of the Session, and the House had still plenty of time to deal with this subject; and if it was right to extend the Bill to Ireland the House ought not to be frightened out of doing so by the threats of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he did not think it right that the hon. and learned Gentleman should apply such a term to what he said. He made no threat; he merely expressed his intention of exercising his Constitutional right of opposing the measure.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, he should like to know what single word the hon. and learned Member would use to describe the intimation he had given them?

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would not describe it by any single word, but by several.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, the word he had used was the nearest he could think of to describe the intimation of the hon. and learned Member that if the Amendment was not accepted he would devote his days and nights to constructing Amendments.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he never mentioned the word Amendments.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE said, at this period of the Session it would not be just or wise or right to yield to such an

intimation as this. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had dealt with what might be styled the "atmosphere" of the Irish Courts. But the worse the atmosphere was, the more essential was it that the prisoner should be allowed the privilege of giving evidence. It was said that an ignorant prisoner would be pounced upon and unfairly cross-examined by experienced Queen's Counsel; but his experience of criminal trials was that if an ignorant witness was unfairly cross-examined the sympathies of the jury were always drawn to him. [An hon. MEMBER: Packed juries.] Well, if the Judges were partial and the juries were packed, no rules of evidence were of much importance. The safeguard afforded by publicity existed in Ireland as in England. The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney had referred to the Maamtrasna case. With regard to that case he (Sir Edward Clarke) had in the past expressed his opinion. He adhered to that opinion, and was quite ready to repeat it at any time. But that case was very curiously introduced by the hon. and learned Member, who argued that if the prisoners could at the Maamtrasna trial have given evidence an innocent man would have been saved, and then the hon. and learned Member went on to argue that this change of the law should not be extended to Ireland. At present there existed absurd anomalies, owing to a man charged under the Criminal Law Amendment Act with an assault on a child being permitted to give evidence, while another man charged with an attempt to commit a still more serious crime could not. These anomalies existed in Ireland as well as in England, and ought to be abolished. He felt very strongly in favour of that portion of the Bill which swept away that barbarous rule which prevented a husband and wife giving evidence for each other. It was amazing that such a rule should have been allowed to continue on the Statute Book until now. The inequity of this rule was strongly brought home to his mind by a case in which he appeared for a prisoner some years ago. The prisoner, a respectable man, who had been 28 years in the employment of the same firm in London, was charged with setting fire to the premises. He was the last person known to leave the

premises. He left at 6 o'clock, and the fire occurred at 8 o'clock. He believed the prisoner to be innocent—the man being of the highest character and having no motive for committing the crime. He asked him to account for the interval between 6 and 8 o'clock. The man said he had been making a few purchases at one or two shops, and then went home and helped his wife with the children. The children were too young to be put in the witness-box, and by the existing laws of evidence neither the wife nor the husband could give any evidence. He did not dare to call the persons at whose shops the prisoner had called, for they could only account for half-an-hour of the two hours, and one hour and a-half would have remained unaccounted for. Fortunately the presiding Judge carefully looked into the case, and the man was acquitted. But this case firmly convinced him of the unfairness of not permitting a wife to give evidence on behalf of her husband. There was no real ground for the suggestion that the change which the Bill would effect would injure any innocent prisoner. Hon. Members from Ireland said that prisoners in that country were tried in an atmosphere of adverse prejudice. Well, given an unfair Judge, a jury prejudiced against the prisoner, and a prosecuting counsel inclined to be unfair—given such a state of things, what possible chance would a prisoner have who could not give evidence in his own behalf? By shutting out the evidence of an innocent prisoner, tried before an unfair Judge and a biased jury, dealing with inferences and hypotheses they would be doing the very thing which must destroy all his chances of proving his innocence. He had known many cases of prisoners who had saved themselves by the statements which they were permitted to make to the jury; and again and again prisoners had asked him, with tears in their eyes, whether they could not give evidence. The present practice was not at all satisfactory. It would be remembered how, at the trial of O'Donnell some four years ago, the counsel for the prisoner claimed the right to state to the Court, as a narrative of facts, the story supplied to him by his client, and how the Judges decided that counsel had no such right. In consequence of that decision the dangerous practice had arisen of allow-

ing a prisoner to make a statement before his counsel's address to the jury. This gave a great advantage to a clever rogue, but if he were liable to cross-examination his cleverness would avail him little. In the witness-box clumsy innocence would succeed in gaining an acquittal from a jury far more certainly than clever roguery. He trusted that the House would persist in its determination to pass the Bill unaltered, and thus to do an act of real and substantial justice to innocent defendants, not only in this country, but in Ireland also.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), powerful as they were, were not directed to the point of the Amendment, but to the defence of the general principles of the Bill. There was no difference of opinion as to the utility of the measure. They were all agreed that to allow prisoners to become witnesses when they wished to do so would be a humane and beneficent change. He was unwilling, for that reason, to make a remark of a political character. But the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) must now perceive that the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite of the principles upon which Ireland ought to be governed were not the views he entertained. He could not agree that all the reasons which existed for the application of the Bill to England must necessarily exist in the case of Ireland also. The hon. and learned Solicitor General said that there was no distinction between the cases. It would be very easy to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman why he did not lay down the same principle in such a matter, for example, as local government. If the principles upon which the demand for the extension of local government was founded were admitted to be beneficent and wise, why not extend their application to Ireland? The hon. and learned Gentleman had not dealt effectively with the argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy)—that the atmosphere of an Irish Court was not supposed by the people of Ireland to be favourable to the prisoner. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford proved that there was all the difference in the world between the operation of a measure in

Courts like the English Courts and its operation in Courts such as the hon. and learned Member and his Friends believed theirs to be. This was a Bill in favour of the prisoner; but the Government were going to apply it in a country where it would inevitably be regarded—whether rightly or wrongly—as being hostile to the prisoner. The effect of the measure upon Irish opinion would be the very opposite of that which was justly claimed for it in England. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) had argued with great plausibility that the supposition that there was animus in the mind of a Judge against a prisoner was all the more convincing reason why they should give the prisoner the chance of exculpating himself by giving evidence. But it must not be forgotten that if the contention of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford were correct, and if there was animus in the mind of an Irish Judge and a strong animus in the prosecuting counsel, the prisoner under this Bill would be exposed to the risk of a bitterly hostile cross-examination, and enforce on him a very serious disadvantage. It appeared to him (Mr. John Morley) the sheerest pedantry to insist that because this was a wise and desirable change in itself and in this country, they were, therefore, bound to force it upon Ireland against the wishes of her Representatives, and against the opinion of so staunch a partizan of the Government on the Opposition side as the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury was free from the suspicion of motive which attached to the Irish Members below the Gangway, and he had shown that he was strongly opposed to the change itself; and on both these grounds his opinion was entitled to the greatest weight. Would the Government insist upon extending the legislation to Ireland against the wish of all the popular Representatives of that country, and against the opinion of a partizan of their own who was most competent to give an opinion upon that subject? He wished to underline the argument of the hon. and learned Member for the City of Durham (Mr. Milvain), which he was surprised the Government did not see the force of. They considered they were engaged on the difficult task of restoring law and order in Ireland. They said

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they had now got a state of opinion in Ireland much more favourable than it had long been to the maintenance of law and order and respect for the administration of the law. They must admit, therefore, that it was most undesirable politically to arise fresh jealousy by introducing a single element of suspicion or irritation into the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland at a moment like this; and yet they must equally admit that this would be the effect of the provision which, with deplorable tenacity, the Government insisted upon extending to Ireland. For his part, if his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. M. Healy) limited his Amendment to the proposal that it was inexpedient to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners, he (Mr. John Morley) would support it with a clear conscience, and with no desire to do anything but to further the passing of the Bill as regards England and Scotland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he thought they were all agreed that they ought to extend to Ireland, when it was possible, every beneficial measure they gave to England. Therefore, what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had had to do was to show that in Ireland circumstances were different in some matter relative to the particular issue before the House. The special illustration used was the most astonishing and extraordinary he ever heard; because, while in the matter of local government the circumstances of Ireland were enormously different from those of England, there was great similarity between them in the administration of justice. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had enunciated a proposition which he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) strongly repudiated—namely, that the Bench in Ireland showed a bias against a prisoner, which their brethren in England did not show. Learned gentlemen did not practice before the Courts in both countries; and the impression he had derived from speaking with those who were acquainted with the administration of Criminal Law in both England and Ireland, was that the Irish Judges

were as careful as their English brethren to see that everything was urged for the prisoner that could be urged, and that the inclination of justice should always be in favour of the prisoner whenever there was a doubt. What the right hon. Gentleman contended was not so much that the machinery was bad as that public opinion in Ireland was against it. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) ventured to say that public opinion in Ireland—or, for the matter of that, in this country either—did not exist on this subject outside legal circles. If they put this machinery in force, and if the Irish people on seeing how it worked concluded that it worked badly, he would admit that there was something in the plea that public opinion was opposed to it. But at present, what was against it was the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford—not an opinion which he underrated, because he believed that it would materially assist in the passing of the Bill. What they ought to look at in this matter was not the opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) or the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, however great ought to be the weight of those opinions in the House. What they had to consider was whether this Bill was an improvement of the machinery of criminal justice, as every human being admitted it to be in England; and no argument had been brought forward to show that it would not be an equal improvement in Ireland. It was surely an unorthodox proposal that because there was a certain amount of uninformed sentiment against the change in the mind of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, they should therefore refuse to innocent men in Ireland the protection they gave to innocent men in England. Whether Irish tribunals were good or bad, it must be in the interests of justice that full evidence should be brought into the light of day with regard to every case that was tried. If there was prejudice against prisoners, and magistrates were unjust Judges, the way to keep them in order was that public opinion should be brought to bear upon their action, so as to compel them to have brought into Court all the evidence which could tell in favour of innocent

men. Inasmuch as this Bill was admitted to be one of the most powerful pieces of machinery for effecting that object, he should for that reason, if for no other, do everything he could to bring it into operation for Ireland as well as for England.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) entirely forgot the argument put forward from the Irish Benches. What he (Mr. Dillon) and his hon. Friends contended, and what they believed was, that the atmosphere and the methods adopted in Irish Courts would prevent this machinery being favourable to the prisoner in Ireland, as it would be undoubtedly in England. In that lay the whole essence of the controversy. It was a most important point of the controversy, and so it had been justly and properly dwelt on by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench — namely, that it did not matter so much whether they were right or not in their opinion; the question was whether they were faithfully reflecting the sentiments of the people of Ireland in this matter, and if that were so the argument in favour of omitting Ireland from the Bill was unanswerable. He thought the reception given to the appeal made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was a further and most striking illustration of the uselessness of having Irish Members in the House of Commons at all. What was the good of the Irish Members in the House? He overheard an hon. Gentleman say it would be better if they were not there. [*A Cheer.*] Yes, hon. Gentlemen cheered the idea that they were useless. He asked the Speaker whether this instance was not an extremely apposite illustration of the utter uselessness of Irish Members being in the House of Commons at all? What was the good of the Irish people sending Members to Parliament if the House of Commons refused to believe that they were stating the views of their constituents? They had to-night heard the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) and the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in the most self-satisfied way, proclaim themselves to be better judges of how the Irish people

would receive this measure than the Irish Members. That was certainly what the whole of their argument amounted to. Coming to the question of how this Bill would be received in Ireland, he maintained that it was impossible for anyone at all acquainted with the condition of Ireland to doubt that it would be received by the people of that country as a measure directed against prisoners. Let him point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it was an unhappy circumstance in the history and condition of Ireland, that the people of Ireland were obliged to follow the administration of the Criminal Law a great deal more closely than the people of England. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) told the House that there existed no public opinion in Ireland upon this matter. The right hon. Gentleman was entirely mistaken, and he would find that the moment this Bill and its proposals became known to the people, there would be a great outcry against it. Men in Ireland did not know from week to week how soon they might be hauled up before the magistrates, and therefore there existed a much keener and wideawake public opinion on the question of criminal practice than existed in England. This was not a question confined to lawyers, and to those persons now administering the Criminal Law. It was perfectly absurd to suppose that in Ireland there was the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges and in the fairness and impartiality of prosecuting counsel as in this country. Everybody who was acquainted with the past history of criminal procedure in Ireland knew that the vast majority of prosecuting counsel followed the prisoner like bloodhounds on the track, and they had been over and over again proved to have carried on such proceedings for the conviction of a man, both in the manipulation of evidence and in their conduct in Court, as would simply horrify an English lawyer. The great aim the Irish prosecuting counsel had set before them was, *per fas aut nefas*, to get a conviction. He ventured to say with confidence that if any English lawyer, accustomed to criminal prosecutions in this country, were to attend a Bar Dinner, or a meeting in which there were a number of Crown Prosecutors in Ireland, he would come home horrified

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at the tone and temper adopted by these men towards prisoners. He (Mr. Dillon) did not accuse any particular individual Crown Prosecutor; but he alleged that it was a common proceeding for these gentlemen to endeavour to get a conviction under any and all circumstances. They knew the history of Mr. Peter O'Brien—they knew what he had done, and he was at the head of the whole criminal prosecuting system in Ireland, and when they were told by hon. and learned and by right hon. Gentleman opposite, that the system proposed by this Bill would have come to the relief of the accused in the Maamtrasna murder case, he would assert his belief that it would in no way have come to the rescue of Myles Joyce. He did not think that Myles Joyce or anyone else would have dared voluntarily to face the cross-examination of a man like Peter O'Brien. He (Mr. Dillon) knew perfectly well the story of the manner in which the evidence in the Maamtrasna case was manipulated by the prosecuting counsel and the prosecuting solicitor before it came into Court. They knew that Mr. Peter O'Brien was in possession of evidence the tendency of which would have been to give the prisoner a chance, and that they deliberately suppressed it. Evidence would have been forthcoming from a certain boy whose testimony might very probably have shaken the opinion of the jury as to the guilt of the prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor would not allow it to be used, and it was with regard to such men as this—to protect prisoners and give them fair-play—that the Irish Members were asked to assent to the principle of this Bill. He (Mr. Dillon) held that if Myles Joyce had had an opportunity of going into the witness-box and submitting to an inquiry, he never would have dared to avail himself of it so long as Mr. Peter O'Brien was the prosecuting counsel, and there hon. Members would appreciate the difference between England and Ireland. An Englishman, whatever he might be accused of, knew perfectly well that if he got up in Court and told his story simply and fairly, he would not be bullied and browbeaten by the prosecuting counsel, and he knew perfectly well that if he convinced the prosecuting counsel that there was a doubt in the case he would get the benefit of the doubt. But in the mind

of the Irish prisoner such a belief did not exist. He (Mr. Dillon) spoke on this subject with a perfect knowledge of the opinion of his fellow-countrymen. It was preposterous for the English Attorney General and Solicitor General, who had probably never put a foot on Irish soil in their lives, and knew nothing about the people of Ireland—it was preposterous for them and the Irish Secretary to tell him that they knew the minds of the Irish peasantry better than the Irish Members did, and that the Irish peasantry would accept this Bill as an emancipating measure. Whatever might be the faults of himself and his Party—whatever might be their sins and ignorances—surely they might be allowed to speak on behalf of the feelings, aye, and the prejudices, too, of the Irish peasantry if they desired. He declared that this measure would not be accepted for a moment as anything but an addition to the coercive system for strengthening the awful machinery of the law in Ireland directed against the peasantry. The ordinary Irish peasant, when he felt he was innocent, would not dare to go into the witness-box. He certainly would not do so as long as the present Irish Attorney General was in Office. The reputation of that Gentleman in Ireland was such that anyone who had not the greatest confidence in his own ability would not dare to face him. And what would be the result on the Court if the accused person, having this dread in his mind, were to refuse to give evidence on his own behalf? Mr. Peter O'Brien would say—"What more evidence do you want?—this man refuses to go into the box, and is, therefore, manifestly guilty." That argument would tell enormously with a jury carefully packed, as juries were packed in Ireland. He (Mr. Dillon) knew very well how this thing would operate. It would operate in the direction of increasing enormously the distrust of these poor people in Ireland in the administration of the law, and it would operate to put into the hands of the Crown Counsel a still wider discretion than that they had used latterly, and which they had used with most fatal effect on the minds of the Irish people. Let him bring to the notice of hon. Members who thought that he (Mr. Dillon) and his Friends were exaggerating when they stated that the

Crown Counsel in Ireland were not impartial and honest in the discharge of their duty, the facts of a recent murder trial in Wicklow—and when he detailed these facts he did not believe there was a man in the House who would not be thoroughly convinced that the individual accused in this trial could not for a moment believe in the just spirit either of the prosecuting counsel or of the Judge. What happened? The Clare peasants who were accused of the murder of the policeman Whelehan under the Crimes Act were brought from Clare to Wicklow, and when in Wicklow they were brought before a special panel, and the jury was packed upon that special panel. The men were convicted. The Crown strained every nerve to get a conviction; and he was bound to say that the feelings of these men must have been something frightful when they saw the jury which was selected to try them. Well, immediately after that trial, there came on the trial of the murderer of Kinsella, and the Crown Counsel, having the power to do so, placed this man on trial before his own employers—that was to say, the owners of the property forming the scene of the murder. They did not exercise the power they exercised in the other case. No opposition was offered on the part of the Crown Counsel when Kinsella's murderer applied for a change of panel from a common to a special jury. When the accused was brought with the consent and connivance of the Crown before a jury of Wicklow landlords, the Crown Counsel refused to challenge any jurymen, and allowed the first men whose names had been called to be put on the panel. They had allowed the prisoner 30 challenges, but in the other case they had themselves used 30 challenges against the Clare men in order to pack the jury. And then, in open Court, the whole demeanour of the Crown Prosecutor was friendly to the murderer of Kinsella, and he did not take the trouble to conceal, after the trial was over, that he was rejoiced at the acquittal. Now, in the face of these trials, which had occurred within the last six months or so, were the Irish Members to be told that there was no ground for the belief of the Irish peasant when he might happen to be charged with offences to be put upon his trial, that the atmosphere of the Court was not unimpartial? It was in the face of these facts that he said to

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hon. Members opposite that they must not be surprised if the Irish Members did not give the same reception to a measure of this character which the English Members and the English people did. But this was not the whole case; it was only one branch of it. He had noticed that the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General for Ireland had passed very lightly over the case of the Resident Magistrates. The Solicitor General for England, with his usual glibness of argument, said that if they were improving one branch of criminal administration for one part of the United Kingdom they were improving it for all. He (Mr. Dillon) would ask the House to consider the principles laid down by Resident Magistrates in Ireland. Only the other day, in a certain case which came before one of these Resident Magistrates, the magistrate said—

"These men are accused of holding a certain meeting, and there is a presumption—a general belief—that the meeting was held, and they, if they can, have to give proof that it was not held,"

and thereupon he sentenced them to terms of imprisonment with hard labour. This Resident Magistrate had actually laid the burden of proving that a meeting was not held upon the prisoners. The police could not give evidence that a meeting was held, but only of the existence of a presumption that it was held. It must be remembered also that there was this difference between law in England and in Ireland in these cases—namely, that there was no appeal in Ireland when sentences were short sentences. Was it that the Government were going to introduce a system with regard to short sentences in which the Crown Prosecutors were going to be allowed to call on every prisoner to go into the witness-box and prove his innocence, and submit to cross-examination before a hostile counsel and hostile magistrates—gentlemen who did not conceal their ferocious hostility, and who had actually been known to give a physical expression to that hostility the moment after they had left the Bench. The magistrates in Ireland never were impartial, they were always strongly opposed to prisoners, and he (Mr. Dillon) maintained that if this new law were introduced into Ireland the procedure of the Resident Magistrates would be

this. To every man who came into Court accused of a crime they would say "Are you going to be examined? If you are not, you are guilty." That would be a very serious matter, and he (Mr. Dillon) declared that he did not believe that he was exaggerating in the slightest degree what would be the result of this measure in a Magistrate's Court. The Irish Members were told that they did not give a single argument why there was any difference in Ireland from the position of affairs in England with regard to these laws. He would ask, what use was it for them to give any arguments? For all practical purposes the Irish Members on these benches might just as well sit as dumb logs. When they gave arguments they were sneered at, and when they gave the opinions of their constituents they were told by English officials that they knew more about these things than the Representatives of the Irish people themselves did. In conclusion, he would ask whether any hon. Member would explain on what ground the Government wanted to retain Irish Members at Westminster instead of allowing them to go away and manage their own affairs at home?

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he must join in the appeal which had been made to the Attorney General for England. He was surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should persist in joining in this Bill two countries so differently situated as England and Ireland—countries to which the same arguments did not in any degree apply. Every consideration which induced them to support this measure for Scotland and England compelled them to refuse their assent to it for Ireland. If the Attorney General were actuated by a single desire to benefit the people of England, he would, without the slightest hesitation, cut Ireland out of the Bill. But the hon. and learned Gentleman reminded him (Mr. Hunter) of what Macaulay said about the Puritans and bull-baiting—namely, that the Puritans were opposed to bull-baiting not because it hurt the bull, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. It seemed to him, from the course the debate had taken, that the intention of the Government was not so much to benefit the English people as to pass a measure which would be injurious and offensive

to the Irish people. The Government seemed to search with the greatest eagerness for opportunities of trampling upon the opinions of the Irish people. In that respect they had been joined by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay). Well, he (Mr. Hunter) was not surprised. His hon. and learned Friend was logical because he was one of those Gentlemen who thought it would be a great misfortune if Scotch questions were to be decided by Scotch Members; and, holding that view, perhaps, he would think it equally bad that Irish measures should be influenced by the opinion of Irish Members. He (Mr. Hunter), however, did not think that these were opinions that were held in Scotland, or were opinions such as would recommend themselves to this House. He was one of those who very strongly supported this Bill two years ago, on the understanding that it would not be applied to Ireland. What were the reasons that the Bill should be adopted for England and not adopted for Ireland? He would answer that question in a single sentence. It was the greatest fallacy in the world to pretend that the examination of an accused person was, under all circumstances, and in every case, necessarily for that person's benefit. There were many circumstances and many cases where it was a measure not calculated to promote the administration of justice, and not calculated to facilitate the discovery of truth, but calculated for a very opposite purpose. Why did he support this Bill for England? He did so for two reasons. In the first place, there were a great many poor people in England who could not afford to fee a counsel for their defence. One hon. Member stated to-night that the poor man had an advantage as compared with the rich man; but the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had reproved him for the assumption, and said that he himself believed that the advantage was in favour of the rich man as against the poor. He (Mr. Hunter) believed there was no system so well calculated to screen the guilty and protect the innocent as the English system of criminal procedure, when they had counsel on both sides and a Judge and jury. But, at the same time, his belief was that if they had not counsel for a prisoner there was

no system so injurious to a prisoner as the English system. The reason was this. The English system was full of technicalities with regard to the examination of witnesses; and what chance could an unfortunate prisoner have to defend himself under these circumstances? Take a case. A witness was under examination. The Judge invited the prisoner to cross-examine that witness; and how did the prisoner begin? He said—"You said I did so and so." Instantly he was pulled up by the Judge, who informed him in solemn tones—"Sir, you must not make a statement, you can only ask a question." Well, the result was that the unfortunate prisoner was dumb-founded—he did not know where he was. He did not know in what shape to put his question, or how to conduct his case; and then what happened? Why, when all the witnesses were passed over without cross-examination, and the prisoner said "It is not true, as has been stated, that I did so and so, and so and so," the Judge interrupted him with the observation, "It is now too late to go into these matters, you should have asked questions with regard to these points of the witnesses when in the witness-box." The effect of the existing system, where counsel were not employed, was that the Quarter Sessions was very often like leading sheep to the slaughter; but the bias of the Judge was always in favour of the plea of "Not Guilty." He (Mr. Hunter) thought that the English Judges almost invariably acted upon the principle that it was better that 10 guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should suffer. In these cases, where prisoners were not defended by counsel, and where they were protected by perfectly fair and impartial Judges, he believed that the passing of this Bill would be an immense help and improvement to these prisoners, and, to a large extent, would be an effectual substitute for counsel they could not employ. But everything depended on the Judge—everything depended, also, on the prosecuting counsel, and on the way in which the prosecuting counsel was allowed to deal with the prisoner. There were such things as fair questions and unfair questions, and a prisoner was protected by counsel who could guard him against questions on cross-examination which ought not to be put, and

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even if the prisoner had not counsel in England when such questions were put, the Judge himself would protect the prisoner. But what assurance had they that before the Resident Magistrates—before the removable magistrates—any such protection would be afforded? Now, he read a short time ago a letter written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) relating his experience at the trial of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt before a County Court Judge in Ireland, and he saw there that the right hon. Gentleman expressed his horror and consternation at the spirit and manner, at the unfairness with which the trial was conducted both on the part of the prosecuting counsel and on the part of the Judge. That was the impression on the mind of an English gentleman who was accustomed to the administration of justice, in one case, and that a notorious one. That was not the case of an obscure individual, but one in which the Judge knew perfectly well that the eyes of the newspapers were on him, and it might, therefore, be assumed that unusual pains were taken by this gentleman to give, at any rate, an appearance of impartiality to the proceedings on his part. Now, if this happened in the green tree, what would happen in the dry? Could anyone say that anything had been done which would give any English or Irish Member the right to believe in the impartiality of the Irish Resident Magistrates? Since this matter was before the House in 1886, he (Mr. Hunter) had read the criminal cases and reports of trials before the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, and those trials had reminded him, not of anything within his experience, but of Stato trials which took place 250 years ago. If the present English Judges were like the Judges of the Stuart period, if prosecutors were like Lord Coke and other gentlemen who prosecuted in those days, he (Mr. Hunter) should be the last man to vote for a Bill of this kind, for instead of it being a weapon for the defence of the innocent, it would probably be used as an instrument for convicting prisoners when the prosecutor desired to do so. The Judge would draw attention to admissions made, and enlarge upon them and magnify them elaborately—he would drive home every single admission as a most valuable piece of evidence;

but when the prisoner said anything which was in his own favour, if the Judge was not honest and fair and impartial, what he would do would be this: He would point out to the jury—if he had to deal with a jury—that such and such statements rested on no better authority than the evidence of the prisoner himself. He (Mr. Hunter) could, therefore, well believe that in Ireland this Bill would operate to the greatest injustice and hardship, and the greatest cruelty, and would utterly and entirely defeat the object of justice—namely, the discovery of truth. In the present day, in England, we no doubt had impartial justice; but he would just quote one or two sentences from the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, to show the way in which prisoners used to be treated by Attorney Generals in those days. Just imagine if an Attorney General addressed prisoners in that way at the present time, how far they would be from passing such a Rule as that now before the House.

“Sir Walter Raleigh interposed. The Attorney General said to the prisoner: ‘Thou art a monster: thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart.’ Then when Sir Walter Raleigh objected that no evidence had been given against him, and said: ‘If my Lord Cobham be a traitor what is that to me?’ the Attorney General said: ‘All that he did was nothing to thee, thou viper! For I “thou” thee thou traitor!’”

Would the present Government tolerate a rule such as that contained in this Bill when admonished by such a prosecuting counsel as this, and before such a court? To put the whole argument in a nutshell, he (Mr. Hunter) said that the examination of a prisoner as a witness in a case was not in itself necessarily an advantage to a prisoner, nor calculated to promote the cause of justice. It depended entirely upon the way in which justice was administered. It depended upon the Judge, and it depended upon the counsel. It was a powerful weapon, but it was a weapon which could as easily be used against the prisoner as in his favour; and he could not entertain any doubt, from the conduct of the Government in regard to this Bill, that their object was not merely to improve the law of England, but to give an extra example of the principle of that odious Bill that was passed last year.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, the Government now proposed a measure which they declared was much de-

sired by public opinion in England; but the Irish Members now came forward and said—“What you say may be correct; it may be true that the measure is demanded by the English public; it may be true that the public opinion of England demands that a prisoner should have the right of being examined on his own behalf in criminal cases; but, at any rate, there is no demand of that kind in Ireland. We, who represent Ireland in this House, are hostile to such a measure, and believe that so far from its being a benefit to Irish prisoners, it will, on the contrary, too often be used to their prejudice and destruction; and we ask that this measure should not be extended to Ireland.” Now, the Irish Members were met by the declaration on the part of the Government that what they had to consider was, in the words of the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), a broad and great principle, and that it was not with reference to Irish needs, or the local circumstances of Ireland, that the measure must be considered, but by those broad principles which it was said were embodied in the Bill, and which it was generally agreed must be applied to the whole of the United Kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland threw out a challenge which he (Mr. Maurice Healy) thought was a very fair one. He taunted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) with what he considered a novel consideration as proceeding from those on the Opposition side of the House—that was to say, that it did not follow that because a measure was a good and desirable one for England the same measure was good and desirable for Ireland. It did not appear to him (Mr. Maurice Healy) that this was a novel principle coming from this side of the House. It appeared to him that it was because he endeavoured to lay down a principle of that kind in 1887 that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was condemned for having banished political economy to Saturn. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had laid down what he (Mr. Maurice Healy) considered a sound principle, and that was, that in applying a measure of this kind it should also be applied to Ireland, and that those

who resisted it should show that the circumstances of Ireland materially differed from those of England. That was a fair challenge to make; and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) would answer that the case of the Irish Members was that the circumstances of Ireland in connection with the administration of justice and in matters with which this measure dealt were such that the Bill ought not to be applied to Ireland. He would quote, as that of a distinguished authority on this subject, the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the present President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) two years ago in one of the speeches he addressed to his constituents. Speaking to his constituents in Bristol two years ago the right hon. Gentleman said—"Unfortunately, to many persons the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend." Now, that was the whole case of the Irish Members in regard to this measure. The whole case of the Irish Members might be compressed into that sentence of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that to many persons in Ireland the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend. That was the ground they took up, that they maintained that because that state of things prevailed there, though what was urged with regard to the measure might be true as applied to England and Scotland, the arguments had no validity when they came to consider the application of the measure to Ireland.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being present,

Mr. MAURICE HEALY said, he asked whether it was not an unfortunate thing that time after time it should happen in that House that those who represented the vast bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland should demand certain measures, and that time after time the Government should set their wishes aside and refuse those measures; and that time after time measures emanating from the Front Bench opposite should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people in spite of the strenuous resistance of their Representatives? The Government proceeded on the principle that whatever the Irish Representatives asked in this House they should not

get, and whatever they resisted and complained of they should have, whether they liked it or not. He would ask whether that was the proper principle on which to proceed in carrying on the legislation of this country? As it had already been asked in this debate to-night, what duties were Irish Members supposed to perform in this House? What was the value of their representation here if, when the wishes of the Irish people were expressed by those who were sent to this House to give voice to their opinions, they were set aside by right hon. Gentlemen opposite and treated as though they never existed? He maintained that the state of things which existed in England, and which was considered by hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite to justify this measure in England, did not exist in Ireland. In England they had none of that friction between the people and the forces of the Crown and administration of the law which unquestionably existed in Ireland. In England they had none of these political prosecutions which they too often had in Ireland. In England the administrators of the law were popular with the people; the law was carried out in sympathy with the people; English views and opinions were constantly consulted, and hostility between the people and the law was avoided with the utmost care. The very antithesis of this state of things existed in Ireland, and yet they were told that because the measure now before the House was fit and proper for this country, it was equally applicable to the totally different situation that prevailed in Ireland. Now, he was not going to labour the point which had been made more than once in this debate as to the way in which criminal prosecutions were conducted in Ireland from that which prevailed in this country; but he very well remembered how struck he was when he was told once by a gentleman who was concerned in many criminal prosecutions what took place in Ireland a few years ago. He remembered well the barrister, who defended a prisoner in a particular case—he thought it was in regard to a charge of conspiracy to murder or some charge of that kind—telling him that the trial was before a Judge and a special jury of the City of Cork, the prisoner being found guilty, and that when his (Mr. Maurice Healy's) informant went into the

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Bar room, after the trial was over and the news came in that the unhappy man was convicted, the principal counsel for the Crown pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and waved it over his head in exultation at having got the man 10 years' penal servitude. That was not the spirit in which cases were conducted in England, and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) declared that so long as they were conducted in that way in Ireland the effect of this, so far from being an advantage to accused persons, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite claimed for it, would be wrested to their destruction. As to the Maamtrasna case, it was said that if this Bill had been in existence at that time, the prisoner Myles Joyce, who was believed to have been innocent, would have been examined, and would have been able to give his version of the matter, and that, therefore, the miscarriage of justice that they all complained of could never have taken place. He (Mr. Maurice Healy) would say to English Members who made that statement that they little knew what went on in connection with criminal trials in Ireland. He supposed that while he had been in the Legal Profession he had had as much experience of criminal prosecutions as most people. He had defended prisoners of all kinds, criminals and non-criminals, and his experience was that no matter how innocent a prisoner might be, and however convinced they might be that he was telling the truth, the most dangerous thing the defence could do was to produce any witness whatever. Over and over again he (Mr. Maurice Healy) had carefully to consider with counsel whether he should not entirely refuse to produce any witness for the prisoner, having regard to the manner in which these witnesses would be treated by the Crown Counsel and the use which would be made of the necessary mistakes which ignorant peasants would inevitably make in being cross-examined and cross-hackled by the counsel as to what might be utterly irrelevant details. It would be the very same thing when instead of putting up an *alibi* witness or a witness to prove the case, they put up the prisoner to prove it himself. They would be always met by the argument, "If the prisoner was wicked enough to commit this crime do you think he would have any hesitation in going into the witness-box and committing perjury?"

That was an argument which would be used with fatal effect with the jury, and, therefore, it would come to this, that everything that the prisoner could say that would prejudice him, every admission that he would make and everything that would fall from him and could connect him with the crime, would be used against him, whilst everything that he said in his own favour would be treated with the observation, "You cannot rely on what he says, for anyone wicked enough to commit this crime would have no hesitation in going into the box and committing perjury." It was said that there were a series of offences under the existing law in connection with which prisoners were already examined, and that what was wanted was simply to extend that series. It was said that if it was possible to examine a prisoner as a witness in one case, it was possible in all cases. Well, he (Mr. Maurice Healy) denied that. The cases where it was possible to examine a prisoner were of a special character. Take a case under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, for instance, and cases under the Explosives Act, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir. Henry James) had referred to. What was the fact? Why under the Explosives Act the duty was thrown on the prisoner of clearing himself. If he was found in possession of explosives his guilt was assumed until he cleared himself. Unless there was a clause in the Act to the effect that the prisoner should have an opportunity of clearing himself he would be necessarily convicted in every case. That was why a prisoner was examined in his own defence under the Explosives Act, and for almost a similar reason the law was changed in the late Criminal Law Amendment Act, because, in the nature of the offences, there were never likely to be more than two persons present—namely, the prosecutor and the prisoner; and, that being so, it would be most unjust to the accused party not to be allowed to give his version of what had taken place. That was the ground upon which the enactment in that case was defended—a special ground which would have application in nine out of 10 cases. This was the case in a whole series of Acts of Parliament—though a very small series—under which the prisoner had a right to be examined in his

ing a prisoner to make a statement before his counsel's address to the jury. This gave a great advantage to a clever rogue, but if he were liable to cross-examination his cleverness would avail him little. In the witness-box clumsy innocence would succeed in gaining an acquittal from a jury far more certainly than clever roguery. He trusted that the House would persist in its determination to pass the Bill unaltered, and thus to do an act of real and substantial justice to innocent defendants, not only in this country, but in Ireland also.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, that the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), powerful as they were, were not directed to the point of the Amendment, but to the defence of the general principles of the Bill. There was no difference of opinion as to the utility of the measure. They were all agreed that to allow prisoners to become witnesses when they wished to do so would be a humane and beneficent change. He was unwilling, for that reason, to make a remark of a political character. But the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) must now perceive that the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite of the principles upon which Ireland ought to be governed were not the views he entertained. He could not agree that all the reasons which existed for the application of the Bill to England must necessarily exist in the case of Ireland also. The hon. and learned Solicitor General said that there was no distinction between the cases. It would be very easy to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman why he did not lay down the same principle in such a matter, for example, as local government. If the principles upon which the demand for the extension of local government was founded were admitted to be beneficent and wise, why not extend their application to Ireland? The hon. and learned Gentleman had not dealt effectively with the argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy)—that the atmosphere of an Irish Court was not supposed by the people of Ireland to be favourable to the prisoner. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford proved that there was all the difference in the world between the operation of a measure in

Courts like the English Courts and its operation in Courts such as the hon. and learned Member and his Friends believed theirs to be. This was a Bill in favour of the prisoner; but the Government were going to apply it in a country where it would inevitably be regarded—whether rightly or wrongly—as being hostile to the prisoner. The effect of the measure upon Irish opinion would be the very opposite of that which was justly claimed for it in England. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) had argued with great plausibility that the supposition that there was animus in the mind of a Judge against a prisoner was all the more convincing reason why they should give the prisoner the chance of exculpating himself by giving evidence. But it must not be forgotten that if the contention of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford were correct, and if there was animus in the mind of an Irish Judge and a strong animus in the prosecuting counsel, the prisoner under this Bill would be exposed to the risk of a bitterly hostile cross-examination, and enforce on him a very serious disadvantage. It appeared to him (Mr. John Morley) the sheerest pedantry to insist that because this was a wise and desirable change in itself and in this country, they were, therefore, bound to force it upon Ireland against the wishes of her Representatives, and against the opinion of so staunch a partizan of the Government on the Opposition side as the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury was free from the suspicion of motive which attached to the Irish Members below the Gangway, and he had shown that he was strongly opposed to the change itself; and on both these grounds his opinion was entitled to the greatest weight. Would the Government insist upon extending the legislation to Ireland against the wish of all the popular Representatives of that country, and against the opinion of a partizan of their own who was most competent to give an opinion upon that subject? He wished to underline the argument of the hon. and learned Member for the City of Durham (Mr. Milvain), which he was surprised the Government did not see the force of. They considered they were engaged on the difficult task of restoring law and order in Ireland. They said

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they had now got a state of opinion in Ireland much more favourable than it had long been to the maintenance of law and order and respect for the administration of the law. They must admit, therefore, that it was most undesirable politically to arise fresh jealousy by introducing a single element of suspicion or irritation into the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland at a moment like this; and yet they must equally admit that this would be the effect of the provision which, with deplorable tenacity, the Government insisted upon extending to Ireland. For his part, if his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. M. Healy) limited his Amendment to the proposal that it was inexpedient to extend to Ireland a measure which would confer on magistrates the power to cross-examine prisoners, he (Mr. John Morley) would support it with a clear conscience, and with no desire to do anything but to further the passing of the Bill as regards England and Scotland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he thought they were all agreed that they ought to extend to Ireland, when it was possible, every beneficial measure they gave to England. Therefore, what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) had had to do was to show that in Ireland circumstances were different in some matter relative to the particular issue before the House. The special illustration used was the most astonishing and extraordinary he ever heard; because, while in the matter of local government the circumstances of Ireland were enormously different from those of England, there was great similarity between them in the administration of justice. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had enunciated a proposition which he (Mr. A. J. Balfour) strongly repudiated—namely, that the Bench in Ireland showed a bias against a prisoner, which their brethren in England did not show. Learned gentlemen did not practice before the Courts in both countries; and the impression he had derived from speaking with those who were acquainted with the administration of Criminal Law in both England and Ireland, was that the Irish Judges

were as careful as their English brethren to see that everything was urged for the prisoner that could be urged, and that the inclination of justice should always be in favour of the prisoner whenever there was a doubt. What the right hon. Gentleman contended was not so much that the machinery was bad as that public opinion in Ireland was against it. He (Mr. A. J. Balfour) ventured to say that public opinion in Ireland—or, for the matter of that, in this country either—did not exist on this subject outside legal circles. If they put this machinery in force, and if the Irish people on seeing how it worked concluded that it worked badly, he would admit that there was something in the plea that public opinion was opposed to it. But at present, what was against it was the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford—not an opinion which he underrated, because he believed that it would materially assist in the passing of the Bill. What they ought to look at in this matter was not the opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) or the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, however great ought to be the weight of those opinions in the House. What they had to consider was whether this Bill was an improvement of the machinery of criminal justice, as every human being admitted it to be in England; and no argument had been brought forward to show that it would not be an equal improvement in Ireland. It was surely an unorthodox proposal that because there was a certain amount of uninformed sentiment against the change in the mind of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, they should therefore refuse to innocent men in Ireland the protection they gave to innocent men in England. Whether Irish tribunals were good or bad, it must be in the interests of justice that full evidence should be brought into the light of day with regard to every case that was tried. If there was prejudice against prisoners, and magistrates were unjust Judges, the way to keep them in order was that public opinion should be brought to bear upon their action, so as to compel them to have brought into Court all the evidence which could tell in favour of innocent

men. Inasmuch as this Bill was admitted to be one of the most powerful pieces of machinery for effecting that object, he should for that reason, if for no other, do everything he could to bring it into operation for Ireland as well as for England.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, the eighthon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) entirely forgot the argument put forward from the Irish Benches. What he (Mr. Dillon) and his hon. Friends contended, and what they believed was, that the atmosphere and the methods adopted in Irish Courts would prevent this machinery being favourable to the prisoner in Ireland, as it would be undoubtedly in England. In that lay the whole essence of the controversy. It was a most important point of the controversy, and so it had been justly and properly dwelt on by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench — namely, that it did not matter so much whether they were right or not in their opinion; the question was whether they were faithfully reflecting the sentiments of the people of Ireland in this matter, and if that were so the argument in favour of omitting Ireland from the Bill was unanswerable. He thought the reception given to the appeal made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was a further and most striking illustration of the uselessness of having Irish Members in the House of Commons at all. What was the good of the Irish Members in the House? He overheard an hon. Gentleman say it would be better if they were not there. [*A Cheer.*] Yes, hon. Gentlemen cheered the idea that they were useless. He asked the Speaker whether this instance was not an extremely apposite illustration of the utter uselessness of Irish Members being in the House of Commons at all? What was the good of the Irish people sending Members to Parliament if the House of Commons refused to believe that they were stating the views of their constituents? They had to-night heard the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) and the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in the most self-satisfied way, proclaim themselves to be better judges of how the Irish people

would receive this measure than the Irish Members. That was certainly what the whole of their argument amounted to. Coming to the question of how this Bill would be received in Ireland, he maintained that it was impossible for anyone at all acquainted with the condition of Ireland to doubt that it would be received by the people of that country as a measure directed against prisoners. Let him point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it was an unhappy circumstance in the history and condition of Ireland, that the people of Ireland were obliged to follow the administration of the Criminal Law a great deal more closely than the people of England. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) told the House that there existed no public opinion in Ireland upon this matter. The right hon. Gentleman was entirely mistaken, and he would find that the moment this Bill and its proposals became known to the people, there would be a great outcry against it. Men in Ireland did not know from week to week how soon they might be hauled up before the magistrates, and therefore there existed a much keener and wideawake public opinion on the question of criminal practice than existed in England. This was not a question confined to lawyers, and to those persons now administering the Criminal Law. It was perfectly absurd to suppose that in Ireland there was the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges and in the fairness and impartiality of prosecuting counsel as in this country. Everybody who was acquainted with the past history of criminal procedure in Ireland knew that the vast majority of prosecuting counsel followed the prisoner like bloodhounds on the track, and they had been over and over again proved to have carried on such proceedings for the conviction of a man, both in the manipulation of evidence and in their conduct in Court, as would simply horrify an English lawyer. The great aim the Irish prosecuting counsel had set before them was, *per fas aut nefas*, to get a conviction. He ventured to say with confidence that if any English lawyer, accustomed to criminal prosecutions in this country, were to attend a Bar Dinner, or a meeting in which there were a number of Crown Prosecutors in Ireland, he would come home horrified

Mr. A. J. Balfour

at the tone and temper adopted by these men towards prisoners. He (Mr. Dillon) did not accuse any particular individual Crown Prosecutor; but he alleged that it was a common proceeding for these gentlemen to endeavour to get a conviction under any and all circumstances. They knew the history of Mr. Peter O'Brien—they knew what he had done, and he was at the head of the whole criminal prosecuting system in Ireland, and when they were told by hon. and learned and by right hon. Gentleman opposite, that the system proposed by this Bill would have come to the relief of the accused in the Maamtrasna murder case, he would assert his belief that it would in no way have come to the rescue of Myles Joyce. He did not think that Myles Joyce or anyone else would have dared voluntarily to face the cross-examination of a man like Peter O'Brien. He (Mr. Dillon) knew perfectly well the story of the manner in which the evidence in the Maamtrasna case was manipulated by the prosecuting counsel and the prosecuting solicitor before it came into Court. They knew that Mr. Peter O'Brien was in possession of evidence the tendency of which would have been to give the prisoner a chance, and that they deliberately suppressed it. Evidence would have been forthcoming from a certain boy whose testimony might very probably have shaken the opinion of the jury as to the guilt of the prisoner; but the Crown Prosecutor would not allow it to be used, and it was with regard to such men as this—to protect prisoners and give them fair-play—that the Irish Members were asked to assent to the principle of this Bill. He (Mr. Dillon) held that if Myles Joyce had had an opportunity of going into the witness-box and submitting to an inquiry, he never would have dared to avail himself of it so long as Mr. Peter O'Brien was the prosecuting counsel, and there hon. Members would appreciate the difference between England and Ireland. An Englishman, whatever he might be accused of, knew perfectly well that if he got up in Court and told his story simply and fairly, he would not be bullied and browbeaten by the prosecuting counsel, and he knew perfectly well that if he convinced the prosecuting counsel that there was a doubt in the case he would get the benefit of the doubt. But in the mind

of the Irish prisoner such a belief did not exist. He (Mr. Dillon) spoke on this subject with a perfect knowledge of the opinion of his fellow-countrymen. It was preposterous for the English Attorney General and Solicitor General, who had probably never put a foot on Irish soil in their lives, and knew nothing about the people of Ireland—it was preposterous for them and the Irish Secretary to tell him that they knew the minds of the Irish peasantry better than the Irish Members did, and that the Irish peasantry would accept this Bill as an emancipating measure. Whatever might be the faults of himself and his Party—whatever might be their sins and ignorances—surely they might be allowed to speak on behalf of the feelings, aye, and the prejudices, too, of the Irish peasantry if they desired. He declared that this measure would not be accepted for a moment as anything but an addition to the coercive system for strengthening the awful machinery of the law in Ireland directed against the peasantry. The ordinary Irish peasant, when he felt he was innocent, would not dare to go into the witness-box. He certainly would not do so as long as the present Irish Attorney General was in Office. The reputation of that Gentleman in Ireland was such that anyone who had not the greatest confidence in his own ability would not dare to face him. And what would be the result on the Court if the accused person, having this dread in his mind, were to refuse to give evidence on his own behalf? Mr. Peter O'Brien would say—"What more evidence do you want?—this man refuses to go into the box, and is, therefore, manifestly guilty." That argument would tell enormously with a jury carefully packed, as juries were packed in Ireland. He (Mr. Dillon) knew very well how this thing would operate. It would operate in the direction of increasing enormously the distrust of these poor people in Ireland in the administration of the law, and it would operate to put into the hands of the Crown Counsel a still wider discretion than that they had used latterly, and which they had used with most fatal effect on the minds of the Irish people. Let him bring to the notice of hon. Members who thought that he (Mr. Dillon) and his Friends were exaggerating when they stated that the

Crown Counsel in Ireland were not impartial and honest in the discharge of their duty, the facts of a recent murder trial in Wicklow—and when he detailed these facts he did not believe there was a man in the House who would not be thoroughly convinced that the individual accused in this trial could not for a moment believe in the just spirit either of the prosecuting counsel or of the Judge. What happened? The Clare peasants who were accused of the murder of the policeman Whelehan under the Crimes Act were brought from Clare to Wicklow, and when in Wicklow they were brought before a special panel, and the jury was packed upon that special panel. The men were convicted. The Crown strained every nerve to get a conviction; and he was bound to say that the feelings of these men must have been something frightful when they saw the jury which was selected to try them. Well, immediately after that trial, there came on the trial of the murderer of Kinsella, and the Crown Counsel, having the power to do so, placed this man on trial before his own employers—that was to say, the owners of the property forming the scene of the murder. They did not exercise the power they exercised in the other case. No opposition was offered on the part of the Crown Counsel when Kinsella's murderer applied for a change of panel from a common to a special jury. When the accused was brought with the consent and connivance of the Crown before a jury of Wicklow landlords, the Crown Counsel refused to challenge any jurymen, and allowed the first men whose names had been called to be put on the panel. They had allowed the prisoner 30 challenges, but in the other case they had themselves used 30 challenges against the Clare men in order to pack the jury. And then, in open Court, the whole demeanour of the Crown Prosecutor was friendly to the murderer of Kinsella, and he did not take the trouble to conceal, after the trial was over, that he was rejoiced at the acquittal. Now, in the face of these trials, which had occurred within the last six months or so, were the Irish Members to be told that there was no ground for the belief of the Irish peasant when he might happen to be charged with offences to be put upon his trial, that the atmosphere of the Court was not unimpartial? It was in the face of these facts that he said to

Mr. Dillon

hon. Members opposite that they must not be surprised if the Irish Members did not give the same reception to a measure of this character which the English Members and the English people did. But this was not the whole case; it was only one branch of it. He had noticed that the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Solicitor General for Ireland had passed very lightly over the case of the Resident Magistrates. The Solicitor General for England, with his usual glibness of argument, said that if they were improving one branch of criminal administration for one part of the United Kingdom they were improving it for all. He (Mr. Dillon) would ask the House to consider the principles laid down by Resident Magistrates in Ireland. Only the other day, in a certain case which came before one of these Resident Magistrates, the magistrate said—

"These men are accused of holding a certain meeting, and there is a presumption—a general belief—that the meeting was held, and they, if they can, have to give proof that it was not held,"

and thereupon he sentenced them to terms of imprisonment with hard labour. This Resident Magistrate had actually laid the burden of proving that a meeting was not held upon the prisoners. The police could not give evidence that a meeting was held, but only of the existence of a presumption that it was held. It must be remembered also that there was this difference between law in England and in Ireland in these cases—namely, that there was no appeal in Ireland when sentences were short sentences. Was it that the Government were going to introduce a system with regard to short sentences in which the Crown Prosecutors were going to be allowed to call on every prisoner to go into the witness-box and prove his innocence, and submit to cross-examination before a hostile counsel and hostile magistrates—gentlemen who did not conceal their ferocious hostility, and who had actually been known to give a physical expression to that hostility the moment after they had left the Bench. The magistrates in Ireland never were impartial, they were always strongly opposed to prisoners, and he (Mr. Dillon) maintained that if this new law were introduced into Ireland the procedure of the Resident Magistrates would be

this. To every man who came into Court accused of a crime they would say "Are you going to be examined? If you are not, you are guilty." That would be a very serious matter, and he (Mr. Dillon) declared that he did not believe that he was exaggerating in the slightest degree what would be the result of this measure in a Magistrate's Court. The Irish Members were told that they did not give a single argument why there was any difference in Ireland from the position of affairs in England with regard to these laws. He would ask, what use was it for them to give any arguments? For all practical purposes the Irish Members on these benches might just as well sit as dumb logs. When they gave arguments they were sneered at, and when they gave the opinions of their constituents they were told by English officials that they knew more about these things than the Representatives of the Irish people themselves did. In conclusion, he would ask whether any hon. Member would explain on what ground the Government wanted to retain Irish Members at Westminster instead of allowing them to go away and manage their own affairs at home?

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he must join in the appeal which had been made to the Attorney General for England. He was surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should persist in joining in this Bill two countries so differently situated as England and Ireland—countries to which the same arguments did not in any degree apply. Every consideration which induced them to support this measure for Scotland and England compelled them to refuse their assent to it for Ireland. If the Attorney General were actuated by a single desire to benefit the people of England, he would, without the slightest hesitation, cut Ireland out of the Bill. But the hon. and learned Gentleman reminded him (Mr. Hunter) of what Macaulay said about the Puritans and bull-baiting—namely, that the Puritans were opposed to bull-baiting not because it hurt the bull, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. It seemed to him, from the course the debate had taken, that the intention of the Government was not so much to benefit the English people as to pass a measure which would be injurious and offensive

to the Irish people. The Government seemed to search with the greatest eagerness for opportunities of trampling upon the opinions of the Irish people. In that respect they had been joined by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay). Well, he (Mr. Hunter) was not surprised. His hon. and learned Friend was logical because he was one of those Gentlemen who thought it would be a great misfortune if Scotch questions were to be decided by Scotch Members; and, holding that view, perhaps, he would think it equally bad that Irish measures should be influenced by the opinion of Irish Members. He (Mr. Hunter), however, did not think that these were opinions that were held in Scotland, or were opinions such as would recommend themselves to this House. He was one of those who very strongly supported this Bill two years ago, on the understanding that it would not be applied to Ireland. What were the reasons that the Bill should be adopted for England and not adopted for Ireland? He would answer that question in a single sentence. It was the greatest fallacy in the world to pretend that the examination of an accused person was, under all circumstances, and in every case, necessarily for that person's benefit. There were many circumstances and many cases where it was a measure not calculated to promote the administration of justice, and not calculated to facilitate the discovery of truth, but calculated for a very opposite purpose. Why did he support this Bill for England? He did so for two reasons. In the first place, there were a great many poor people in England who could not afford to fee a counsel for their defence. One hon. Member stated to-night that the poor man had an advantage as compared with the rich man; but the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had reproved him for the assumption, and said that he himself believed that the advantage was in favour of the rich man as against the poor. He (Mr. Hunter) believed there was no system so well calculated to screen the guilty and protect the innocent as the English system of criminal procedure, when they had counsel on both sides and a Judge and jury. But, at the same time, his belief was that if they had not counsel for a prisoner there was

no system so injurious to a prisoner as the English system. The reason was this. The English system was full of technicalities with regard to the examination of witnesses; and what chance could an unfortunate prisoner have to defend himself under these circumstances? Take a case. A witness was under examination. The Judge invited the prisoner to cross-examine that witness; and how did the prisoner begin? He said—"You said I did so and so." Instantly he was pulled up by the Judge, who informed him in solemn tones—"Sir, you must not make a statement, you can only ask a question." Well, the result was that the unfortunate prisoner was dumb-founded—he did not know where he was. He did not know in what shape to put his question, or how to conduct his case; and then what happened? Why, when all the witnesses were passed over without cross-examination, and the prisoner said "It is not true, as has been stated, that I did so and so, and so and so," the Judge interrupted him with the observation, "It is now too late to go into these matters, you should have asked questions with regard to these points of the witnesses when in the witness-box." The effect of the existing system, where counsel were not employed, was that the Quarter Sessions was very often like leading sheep to the slaughter; but the bias of the Judge was always in favour of the plea of "Not Guilty." He (Mr. Hunter) thought that the English Judges almost invariably acted upon the principle that it was better that 10 guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should suffer. In these cases, where prisoners were not defended by counsel, and where they were protected by perfectly fair and impartial Judges, he believed that the passing of this Bill would be an immense help and improvement to these prisoners, and, to a large extent, would be an effectual substitute for counsel they could not employ. But everything depended on the Judge—everything depended, also, on the prosecuting counsel, and on the way in which the prosecuting counsel was allowed to deal with the prisoner. There were such things as fair questions and unfair questions, and a prisoner was protected by counsel who could guard him against questions on cross-examination which ought not to be put, and

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even if the prisoner had not counsel in England when such questions were put, the Judge himself would protect the prisoner. But what assurance had they that before the Resident Magistrates—before the removable magistrates—any such protection would be afforded? Now, he read a short time ago a letter written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) relating his experience at the trial of Mr. Wilfrid Blunt before a County Court Judge in Ireland, and he saw there that the right hon. Gentleman expressed his horror and consternation at the spirit and manner, at the unfairness with which the trial was conducted both on the part of the prosecuting counsel and on the part of the Judge. That was the impression on the mind of an English gentleman who was accustomed to the administration of justice, in one case, and that a notorious one. That was not the case of an obscure individual, but one in which the Judge knew perfectly well that the eyes of the newspapers were on him, and it might, therefore, be assumed that unusual pains were taken by this gentleman to give, at any rate, an appearance of impartiality to the proceedings on his part. Now, if this happened in the green tree, what would happen in the dry? Could anyone say that anything had been done which would give any English or Irish Member the right to believe in the impartiality of the Irish Resident Magistrates? Since this matter was before the House in 1886, he (Mr. Hunter) had read the criminal cases and reports of trials before the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, and those trials had reminded him, not of anything within his experience, but of State trials which took place 250 years ago. If the present English Judges were like the Judges of the Stuart period, if prosecutors were like Lord Coke and other gentlemen who prosecuted in those days, he (Mr. Hunter) should be the last man to vote for a Bill of this kind, for instead of it being a weapon for the defence of the innocent, it would probably be used as an instrument for convicting prisoners when the prosecutor desired to do so. The Judge would draw attention to admissions made, and enlarge upon them and magnify them elaborately—he would drive home every single admission as a most valuable piece of evidence;

but when the prisoner said anything which was in his own favour, if the Judge was not honest and fair and impartial, what he would do would be this: He would point out to the jury—if he had to deal with a jury—that such and such statements rested on no better authority than the evidence of the prisoner himself. He (Mr. Hunter) could, therefore, well believe that in Ireland this Bill would operate to the greatest injustice and hardship, and the greatest cruelty, and would utterly and entirely defeat the object of justice—namely, the discovery of truth. In the present day, in England, we no doubt had impartial justice; but he would just quote one or two sentences from the time of Sir Walter Raleigh, to show the way in which prisoners used to be treated by Attorney Generals in those days. Just imagine if an Attorney General addressed prisoners in that way at the present time, how far they would be from passing such a Rule as that now before the House.

"Sir Walter Raleigh interposed. The Attorney General said to the prisoner: 'Thou art a monster; thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart.' Then when Sir Walter Raleigh objected that no evidence had been given against him, and said: 'If my Lord Cobham be a traitor what is that to me?' the Attorney General said: 'All that he did was nothing to thee, thou viper! For I "thou" thee thou traitor!'"

Would the present Government tolerate a rule such as that contained in this Bill when admonished by such a prosecuting counsel as this, and before such a court? To put the whole argument in a nutshell, he (Mr. Hunter) said that the examination of a prisoner as a witness in a case was not in itself necessarily an advantage to a prisoner, nor calculated to promote the cause of justice. It depended entirely upon the way in which justice was administered. It depended upon the Judge, and it depended upon the counsel. It was a powerful weapon, but it was a weapon which could as easily be used against the prisoner as in his favour; and he could not entertain any doubt, from the conduct of the Government in regard to this Bill, that their object was not merely to improve the law of England, but to give an extra example of the principle of that odious Bill that was passed last year.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) said, the Government now proposed a measure which they declared was much de-

sired by public opinion in England; but the Irish Members now came forward and said—"What you say may be correct; it may be true that the measure is demanded by the English public; it may be true that the public opinion of England demands that a prisoner should have the right of being examined on his own behalf in criminal cases; but, at any rate, there is no demand of that kind in Ireland. We, who represent Ireland in this House, are hostile to such a measure, and believe that so far from its being a benefit to Irish prisoners, it will, on the contrary, too often be used to their prejudice and destruction; and we ask that this measure should not be extended to Ireland." Now, the Irish Members were met by the declaration on the part of the Government that what they had to consider was, in the words of the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), a broad and great principle, and that it was not with reference to Irish needs, or the local circumstances of Ireland, that the measure must be considered, but by those broad principles which it was said were embodied in the Bill, and which it was generally agreed must be applied to the whole of the United Kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland threw out a challenge which he (Mr. Maurice Healy) thought was a very fair one. He taunted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) with what he considered a novel consideration as proceeding from those on the Opposition side of the House—that was to say, that it did not follow that because a measure was a good and desirable one for England the same measure was good and desirable for Ireland. It did not appear to him (Mr. Maurice Healy) that this was a novel principle coming from this side of the House. It appeared to him that it was because he endeavoured to lay down a principle of that kind in 1887 that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was condemned for having banished political economy to Saturn. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had laid down what he (Mr. Maurice Healy) considered a sound principle, and that was, that in applying a measure of this kind it should also be applied to Ireland, and that those

who resisted it should show that the circumstances of Ireland materially differed from those of England. That was a fair challenge to make; and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) would answer that the case of the Irish Members was that the circumstances of Ireland in connection with the administration of justice and in matters with which this measure dealt were such that the Bill ought not to be applied to Ireland. He would quote, as that of a distinguished authority on this subject, the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the present President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) two years ago in one of the speeches he addressed to his constituents. Speaking to his constituents in Bristol two years ago the right hon. Gentleman said—"Unfortunately, to many persons the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend." Now, that was the whole case of the Irish Members in regard to this measure. The whole case of the Irish Members might be compressed into that sentence of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that to many persons in Ireland the administration of justice appeared as a foe, and not as a friend. That was the ground they took up, that they maintained that because that state of things prevailed there, though what was urged with regard to the measure might be true as applied to England and Scotland, the arguments had no validity when they came to consider the application of the measure to Ireland.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being present,

MR. MAURICE HEALY said, he asked whether it was not an unfortunate thing that time after time it should happen in that House that those who represented the vast bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland should demand certain measures, and that time after time the Government should set their wishes aside and refuse those measures; and that time after time measures emanating from the Front Bench opposite should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people in spite of the strenuous resistance of their Representatives? The Government proceeded on the principle that whatever the Irish Representatives asked in this House they should not

get, and whatever they resisted and complained of they should have, whether they liked it or not. He would ask whether that was the proper principle on which to proceed in carrying on the legislation of this country? As it had already been asked in this debate to-night, what duties were Irish Members supposed to perform in this House? What was the value of their representation here if, when the wishes of the Irish people were expressed by those who were sent to this House to give voice to their opinions, they were set aside by right hon. Gentlemen opposite and treated as though they never existed? He maintained that the state of things which existed in England, and which was considered by hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite to justify this measure in England, did not exist in Ireland. In England they had none of that friction between the people and the forces of the Crown and administration of the law which unquestionably existed in Ireland. In England they had none of these political prosecutions which they too often had in Ireland. In England the administrators of the law were popular with the people; the law was carried out in sympathy with the people; English views and opinions were constantly consulted, and hostility between the people and the law was avoided with the utmost care. The very antithesis of this state of things existed in Ireland, and yet they were told that because the measure now before the House was fit and proper for this country, it was equally applicable to the totally different situation that prevailed in Ireland. Now, he was not going to labour the point which had been made more than once in this debate as to the way in which criminal prosecutions were conducted in Ireland from that which prevailed in this country; but he very well remembered how struck he was when he was told once by a gentleman who was concerned in many criminal prosecutions what took place in Ireland a few years ago. He remembered well the barrister, who defended a prisoner in a particular case—he thought it was in regard to a charge of conspiracy to murder or some charge of that kind—telling him that the trial was before a Judge and a special jury of the City of Cork, the prisoner being found guilty, and that when his (Mr. Maurice Healy's) informant went into the

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Bar room, after the trial was over and the news came in that the unhappy man was convicted, the principal counsel for the Crown pulled his handkerchief out of his pocket and waved it over his head in exultation at having got the man 10 years' penal servitude. That was not the spirit in which cases were conducted in England, and he (Mr. Maurice Healy) declared that so long as they were conducted in that way in Ireland the effect of this, so far from being an advantage to accused persons, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite claimed for it, would be wrested to their destruction. As to the Maamtrasna case, it was said that if this Bill had been in existence at that time, the prisoner Myles Joyce, who was believed to have been innocent, would have been examined, and would have been able to give his version of the matter, and that, therefore, the miscarriage of justice that they all complained of could never have taken place. He (Mr. Maurice Healy) would say to English Members who made that statement that they little knew what went on in connection with criminal trials in Ireland. He supposed that while he had been in the Legal Profession he had had as much experience of criminal prosecutions as most people. He had defended prisoners of all kinds, criminals and non-criminals, and his experience was that no matter how innocent a prisoner might be, and however convinced they might be that he was telling the truth, the most dangerous thing the defence could do was to produce any witness whatever. Over and over again he (Mr. Maurice Healy) had carefully to consider with counsel whether he should not entirely refuse to produce any witness for the prisoner, having regard to the manner in which these witnesses would be treated by the Crown Counsel and the use which would be made of the necessary mistakes which ignorant peasants would inevitably make in being cross-examined and cross-hackled by the counsel as to what might be utterly irrelevant details. It would be the very same thing when instead of putting up an *alibi* witness or a witness to prove the case, they put up the prisoner to prove it himself. They would be always met by the argument, "If the prisoner was wicked enough to commit this crime do you think he would have any hesitation in going into the witness-box and committing perjury?"

That was an argument which would be used with fatal effect with the jury, and, therefore, it would come to this, that everything that the prisoner could say that would prejudice him, every admission that he would make and everything that would fall from him and could connect him with the crime, would be used against him, whilst everything that he said in his own favour would be treated with the observation, "You cannot rely on what he says, for anyone wicked enough to commit this crime would have no hesitation in going into the box and committing perjury." It was said that there were a series of offences under the existing law in connection with which prisoners were already examined, and that what was wanted was simply to extend that series. It was said that if it was possible to examine a prisoner as a witness in one case, it was possible in all cases. Well, he (Mr. Maurice Healy) denied that. The cases where it was possible to examine a prisoner were of a special character. Take a case under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, for instance, and cases under the Explosives Act, which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir. Henry James) had referred to. What was the fact? Why under the Explosives Act the duty was thrown on the prisoner of clearing himself. If he was found in possession of explosives his guilt was assumed until he cleared himself. Unless there was a clause in the Act to the effect that the prisoner should have an opportunity of clearing himself he would be necessarily convicted in every case. That was why a prisoner was examined in his own defence under the Explosives Act, and for almost a similar reason the law was changed in the late Criminal Law Amendment Act, because, in the nature of the offences, there were never likely to be more than two persons present—namely, the prosecutor and the prisoner; and, that being so, it would be most unjust to the accused party not to be allowed to give his version of what had taken place. That was the ground upon which the enactment in that case was defended—a special ground which would have application in nine out of 10 cases. This was the case in a whole series of Acts of Parliament—though a very small series—under which the prisoner had a right to be examined in his

own defence. He could show the whole set of circumstances which induced the Legislature in each case to depart from the general rule that a prisoner should not be allowed to be examined on his own behalf. He said that, in this matter, the analogy of England did not apply—he held that the proper analogy in this case would be that of England 200 years ago when libel and other criminal prosecutions were of daily occurrence, and when Englishmen had to deal with such Judges as Jeffries and Colepepper, if it had been proposed that, under such circumstances, a prisoner should go into the box to be brow-beaten and attacked by the corrupt Judges of that day. He maintained that if they wanted an analogy in this matter they should not take that of the England of to-day, but the England of 200 years ago, when prosecutions for political offences were common and they had the same state of things prevalent in England as now existed in Ireland, political offences being frequently punished as crimes, and the whole of the country rankling under the oppression. Repeating what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) he declared that it was the worst pedantry to say that because this Bill would be proper for England, therefore it would be proper for Ireland. Then again, they were told that the Bill was proper for England whether public opinion was in its favour or not. It was said that in a matter of this kind there could be no real public opinion, as the matter was one more or less for specialists. It was held that the House should take the public opinion of those who were most familiar with the question. Well, decided in that way, he had no doubt the Government would be able to show that in this country public opinion was in favour of the Bill. But how were they to judge of English public opinion in the matter? They had a means of doing it by taking the opinion of the Parliamentary Representatives of the people, and he maintained that if they wanted to get the public opinion of Ireland they must take it in the same way. The Irish Members, however, were told that in order to find what Irish public opinion was the House must not take the statements of Gentlemen on the Irish Benches, but those of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for

Ireland and the hon. and right hon. Members who sat by his side. That was the merest travesty of Parliamentary Government. It would be better that Parliament should not continue at all than that measures should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people in defiance of the wishes of nine-tenths of their Representatives. One day the Irish Members come here and asked for a particular measure, as they did yesterday, and they were voted down by horse, foot, and dragoons. To-day the Government bring in this Bill, and the Irish Members resist it, but they were not to be allowed to have a voice in the matter. He said, therefore, to the Government, let them expel the Irish Members from the House, but do not have this travesty of Parliamentary representation which was illustrated by the Government yesterday, and which was being further illustrated by the proceedings to-night.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he had long taken an interest in the subject-matter of the Bill, and he was surprised at the objection taken to it on the opposite side. He was also disappointed that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had not enlightened the House more on the merits of the view he took. The right hon. and learned Member said the main reason why those on the Government side of the House should not support the Bill, and should not apply it to Ireland, was because their motives were liable to be misrepresented by the Irish Members; but he (Mr. Lawrence) would ask if ever they could go to ask a character from those Members? Was it not a fact that the best of their motives were always misrepresented? He (Mr. Lawrence), at all events, would not decline to support the application of the Bill to Ireland, because his motives were liable to be misrepresented by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. For instance, the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and other Irish Members said it was impossible to convince the Irish people that justice was fairly administered in Ireland. An Irish Member had even seemed to think that the Irish Judges were as bad as Scroggs and Jeffries.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE, continuing, said, when they heard such sentiments as those coming from hon. Members below

Mr. Maurice Healy

the Gangway it was impossible not to look upon them as exaggerations, wholly incapable of proof. If the argument was that we could not convince the Irish people of the justice of modern judicial decisions in Ireland, he was prepared to give up trying to do so, and to take the course he believed to be right. The House was asked to pass the Amendment, because the magistrates in Ireland were removable, and therefore would act unfairly towards the prisoners brought before them. But even the Judges in England were not removable only as long as they behaved rightly while they sat on the Bench, and so in Ireland, he believed, that no magistrate would be removed as long as he dealt fairly to the criminal who stood before him, the person who charged him, and the Crown who put him there. The Amendment, therefore, if it was carried, would practically amount to a Vote of Want of Confidence in the integrity of the Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Chancellor, who might have the removal of the magistrate. The Amendment was a perfectly inconsequential Amendment, and unworthy of support by men who, like himself, believed that the Irish magistrates were only concerned in dealing out equal justice between man and man, between the Crown and the people who might find fault with it. He wished to point out that the measure before the House was of a permanent character. The legislation, such as that of last year, was in one sense of the word of a permanent character, inasmuch as it was not a temporary Bill, yet they all hoped it was a measure which would cease at some time to be law. But the present Bill was a measure the general principle of which applied to all judicial affairs, and therefore it was most fitting that it should obtain, not only in England and Wales and Scotland, but in Ireland too. It was, in fact, generally applicable to all systems of criminal procedure in the Three Kingdoms, and such being the fact they might fairly vote for it. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) compared this kind of legislation to the Local Government Bill, and said the Government were inconsistent in refusing to apply the former Bill to Ireland and in applying the latter. The right hon. Gentleman must know per-

fectly well that the reason why the Government deferred granting Local Government to Ireland was because the Irish people were too much given to lawlessness, and the reason why the present measure was applied was twofold; first, because it would prevent any suspicion of the miscarriage of justice such as was said to have occurred at Maamtrasna; and next, just as on account of the lawlessness they refused Local Government, so they were called to make the law firmer because there was this lawless spirit abroad. If they did not pass the Bill that Session, they might wait until doomsday before the Irish people became so enamoured of the law as to come and ask them for a measure to secure that the right man should go to prison. He was glad the Government were resolved to stand fast. As to gaining the goodwill of the Members below the Gangway, he did not in the least expect them to do that, but if they went forward with careful legislation, the time would come when Ireland would appreciate their motives and do justice to their actions.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, that this question of the extension or non-extension of this Bill to Ireland was merely a matter of expediency. The question was whether, being desirous of seeing the Bill applied to England and Scotland, they were wise in attempting to hamper it with considerations of a political character. The whole matter was fully discussed in the Grand Committee some years ago, and they all knew that it was distinctly upon political grounds that the Irish Members objected to the application of this principle to their country. It seemed to him the question was whether the Government should adopt the easy method of applying the Bill to England, or whether they should hamper its progress and its efficiency by endeavouring to apply it to Ireland against the wishes of the Irish people and their Representatives. Perhaps they had better leave Ireland alone in dealing with this question. Putting that measure aside, he was glad to say that he concurred most heartily in the principle of the Bill. That principle was that in criminal cases an accused person should no longer have his mouth shut. It seemed to him that that had been one of the most extraordinary and

incredible principles of English law, and when this Bill was passed the country would wonder that that superstition had continued so long. The principle of the Bill was that the mouth of a prisoner should no longer be shut, but that he should have an opportunity—he did not say should be compelled, for he did not know how they could compel a man to speak, as they did not apply the torture now-a-days—of giving his own version of the circumstances which had led to his prosecution; that, in fact, he should be invited to speak. But he doubted whether the principle of the Bill was put before the House in a right form. He had had great experience in dealing with the system under which prisoners were examined, and his own impression was that the form in which the Bill was put before the House now, and had been put before the House on previous occasions as applicable to England, was not the right form. He dissented from the view that they could not put before a Court of Law evidence which was not sworn. The examination of a prisoner should be a judicial examination of an accused person and not the examination of a witness. That was the law which prevailed in all countries except England and the United States of America, which drew their law from English law. It was the case in Scotland. It was proposed to apply the Bill to Scotland, but it seemed to him that it would be very difficult to do so in its present form, because they already had an examination of an accused person in Scotland. In Scotland they had never shut the mouth of an accused person, but, on the contrary, had always invited him to make a statement or a declaration. The first thing which happened when an accused person was brought before a Justice in Scotland was his being invited to make, what they called, a declaration, and this form constituted nothing more nor less than a judicial examination of that accused person. He had also had some experience of the working of this principle of law in India. In that country they had the advantage, not of an antiquated law such as prevailed in England, but of the most modern law made by the most modern Jurists, and what were the provisions of this Code in regard to the matter under discussion. Why, in this Code they had nothing of the nature of

the accused person appearing as a witness, but they had a judicial examination of an accused person. That was the law of India and that was the law of Europe, including Scotland, and it seemed to him that it was the law of all countries that were not prejudiced by English law. It seemed to him that if they adopted this system of determining by law that a man's mouth should only be open when he appeared as a witness on oath in a case, they would be involving themselves in a very great difficulty. They might make provision by law, in the manner proposed by the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), to prevent the refusal or the assent of an accused person to give evidence being cited in the case against him. After all, that might be the law, but they could not prevent the minds of the jury being influenced, as they would be reasonably influenced, by the fact that an accused person had not come forward to give his own statement of the case. That being the case, it seemed to him that a prisoner would be practically forced to make a statement, and it appeared to him (Sir George Campbell) that it would be very right that so much compulsion should be applied. It was right in the interest of the innocent and the guilty alike that a certain moral compulsion should be exercised upon the accused in order to get them to make statements and say what was their account of the matter; but it seemed to him, to be placing a man in a very peculiar position to insist upon his taking an oath. It was all very well to do so, perhaps, and to adopt the existing system in cases of secondary degree; but when they came to cases such as murder, he asked, was it right or fair that they should drive a man to come forward and say upon oath whether he had committed the crime or not? That would operate as an irresistible temptation to a man guilty of murder to add to the peril in which he stood as to his life, peril to his soul, by perjury. The kind of judicial examination he referred to would be more efficacious in getting out the truth than any forcing of a man to make a statement on oath. He thought some matters would have to be settled in regard to the Bill. At present, apart from the giving of evidence on oath, it was doubtful whether or not a prisoner could make a statement in his own de-

Sir George Campbell

fence. The practice of English Judges varied very much in that respect, some Judges permitting it and others refusing to do so. It was desirable that that question should be settled, and, for his own part, he was anxious to see it settled in the direction of allowing a prisoner to make a statement in his own defence. He thought that the Bill should be read a second time, but that it should be considerably modified, and perhaps it might be so modified.

SIR WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had assumed too much that Irish opinion was in favour of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). On the contrary, he (Sir William Ewart) had no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland would hail with pleasure the passing of this measure. What was this Bill? It was simply a Bill enabling a prisoner to give evidence, if he wished, and enabling a husband or wife to give evidence in a case against the other. He confessed that he had heard with some surprise the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. After this question had been so thoroughly thrashed out, and public opinion had been so fully formed upon it, he thought the hon. Gentleman was very bold in coming forward practically to offer it opposition, and especially when he himself had said that there was really no difference of opinion as to the passing of the measure for the United Kingdom. No case had been made out, to his (Sir William Ewart's) mind, for excluding Ireland from the operations of the Bill. The opposition had entirely failed; indeed the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for Longford were altogether in favour of the Bill. If the Irish Judges were corrupt—which he indignantly denied—it was all the more important and needful that it should be in the power of the accused to clear himself. He was, as far as possible, in favour of equal laws for all parts of the United Kingdom, and on every occasion, as far as possible, he should give his support to equal laws. On the present occasion he had much pleasure in supporting the application of

the Bill to the whole of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he felt bound, on behalf of the constituency that he had the honour to represent, to enter his protest against this Bill. He believed that it contained a very dangerous principle. He was against the principle of the Bill altogether, but he was especially against it on account of the proposal to extend it to Ireland. He thought the Bill a mistake, and it seemed to him, in his humble judgment, a rather curious thing that the producers and the supporters of it during the whole course of the debate, though it was a Bill proposing to introduce into English law a principle accepted elsewhere, say in France, had never produced anything like an array of testimony to show from experience that the principle was one which worked to the approval of the lawyers of France or other countries. In his opinion, and he thought this would be borne out by everyone who had followed even recently the course of certain trials in France, the principle of this Bill was one which, at any rate in France, had not been an unmixed good. The principle they were about to give up, that of excluding a prisoner from making a statement or submitting himself to cross-examination, had, no doubt, a great many drawbacks. He should like to know any human principle that had not; but had the principle they were proposing to introduce no drawbacks? He held that it had, and very decided ones. He believed that the principle of making the Judge a seeker out of evidence, and an examiner of a prisoner as a witness in a case, was one which would interfere very seriously with that judicial and impartial frame of mind which had so distinguished the English Judges. That judicial and impartial frame of mind had raised the English Judges above the Judges of any other country in the world. The English Judges remained in a higher atmosphere, and, if they were asked to step down from that higher atmosphere and to examine prisoners, the effect would be to interfere with that judicial frame of mind which had always characterized them. Look at any trial in France—at the Pranzini trial for instance. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) had read the manner in which the Judge

at that trial examined and cross-examined and bullied and threatened that prisoner. It was the most scandalous thing that ever occurred. The Judge taunted the man with keeping back the truth. He said—"You were cruel to your mother, why should you not be cruel to your mistress?" and so on. Then look at the still more recent case, the Vignor affair, in connection with the trial of M. Wilson. They had there the Judge d'Instruction, who entertained at dinner one of the defendants in the case. He gave the man a rich dinner, and plied him with wine, and over the walnuts and the wine he succeeded in extracting damaging information from him, and after that he talked over the telephone wire with another of the defendants, changing his voice and pretending he was M. Wilson. Why did he do that? Why, because in France the constant effect of this system on the judicial frame of mind had been to transform the Judge more or less into a seeker out of evidence and a runner down of the prisoner. The glory of a Judge in France consisted, just as much as if he were a Crown Prosecutor in bringing a prisoner to conviction. That Judge had carried the thing so far that it became a public scandal, and he was dismissed from his office. That was only a few weeks ago, but let them take any trial that occurred in France, and they would find that a Judge in France behaved on the Bench in the manner in which he examined a prisoner and ran him down, in a way which would be shocking to the sentiments which had grown up in England with regard to the course of law. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) further said that the principle was a dangerous one, though they were rushing upon it with a light heart. The House seemed to be taking for granted that it was all very fine. He had no doubt that there was a great deal to be said for it, and that there were a great many cases in which justice would benefit by having this principle in force, but he thought that the cases in which it would do an injury to the cause of justice, and create almost a scandal, would be more numerous still. He did not think the House had properly weighed the pros and cons of the case. That being so as to the principle generally, how much more were the Members for Ireland justified in oppo-

Mr. T. P. Gill

sing the application of such a principle to Ireland. The Judges in England, and the Crown Prosecutors in England, as had been universally conceded, lived in a higher atmosphere, in a more impartial, a more calm, and a more just atmosphere than the Judges and Crown Prosecutors in Ireland; and if this practice of allowing a Judge to cross-examine a prisoner, and to sift his evidence, were injurious in the case of men who were entirely impartial and lived in an impartial atmosphere, what would be the effect in Ireland on Judges who were simply fresh from being Crown Prosecutors and reeking with an atmosphere like that of Green Street? He knew a case where a man was tried for his life—the Gould case. The Crown Prosecutor did his best to get Gould convicted. He made a most eloquent denunciation of the prisoner on his first trial. The prisoner came up for trial a second time, and the Crown Prosecutor, who prosecuted him on the first trial, was sitting on the Bench in the case of the second trial. Fancy a case like that. In Ireland they had such jobbery and partizanship in connection with the administration of the law that even a Judge failed to see any impropriety in sitting on the Bench and trying a prisoner on a second trial whom he had himself prosecuted on his first trial. Could such a thing occur in England? He ventured to say that no one could get up and contend that it could. To say that they were introducing on equal terms a principle such as that contained in the Bill into England and Ireland was to make a most monstrous and unjustifiable assertion. The whole course of feeling in Courts of Justice in Ireland was that both the Judge on the Bench—this might be an injustice to a great many of the Judges in Ireland, but let that be as it might—the feeling was that both the Judges on the Bench and the Crown Prosecutors were excessively anxious to obtain convictions. The belief in the popular mind was that when a man was unfortunate enough to get into the Dock there under any circumstance whatever, the only person not bent on running the prisoner to earth was the counsel engaged in his defence. In this country he believed that a Crown Prosecutor would occasionally give up his brief when he was convinced that a prisoner was inno-

cent. ["No, no!"] Well, some hon. Member said that. ["No, no!"] Well, someone had said the converse of that at any rate, that was to say, that the counsel for a guilty person would sometimes give up his brief when he thought the prisoner guilty, and it was only fair to assume that where an opposing advocate thought a person innocent he would also be moved to throw up his brief. They might, however, live till doomsday before they would see such a thing as that occur in Ireland. As had been stated in a newspaper article not long ago, the whole purpose of an Irish Crown Prosecutor was to get a verdict, hook or by crook. The gentlemen on the Bench in Ireland were gentlemen who had stepped up from the position of Crown Prosecutor to that of Judge, and, that being so, it appeared to him that a case of irresistible force had been made out against the introduction of the principle contained in the Bill in Ireland. He thought it an unwise principle, and one the advantages of which would not come near to overpowering its disadvantages. In the case of Ireland there was no reason whatsoever why this principle should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people against the wishes of the vast majority of their Representatives. Goodness only knew that they had had instances enough in which the inequalities existing between the two countries had been exemplified of late, and it appeared to him that the House of Commons was making itself absolutely grotesque by these contradictions. There had been three measures introduced into the House of Commons within the space of some months. One of these proposed to make a tremendous change in the law of Ireland, but it did not propose to apply the same change to England. Another of these measures proposed to make a radical extension of liberty in England and not to extend it to Ireland; and now the Government brought forward a proposal which they said was good for England and they gratuitously proposed to extend it to Ireland, although the Irish Members entreated them with all the warmth they could command not to do so. In spite of the wishes of the Irish people the measure was to be thrust down their throats. He thought that the most prejudiced mind in the House would agree that there was a gross disregard of popu-

lar opinion in Ireland in this House when it sought so to legislate. He should hope that the protest the Irish Members had made to-night would have some effect on the Government, though he was afraid he was much too sanguine in entertaining such a view. At any rate, disregarded as his opinion might be on the question, he had felt it to be his duty, and he distinctly agreed with all his Colleagues in giving a most determined opposition to the application of this Bill to Ireland.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, that the argument of the depravity of the French Courts did not apply in the smallest degree to the present case, because it was not proposed to put in the power of any Judge to cross-examine a prisoner under any circumstances whatever. He rose principally to protest against the universal assumption of hon. Members below the Gangway to speak for the people of Ireland. It was enough for them to express the opinion of the people of Ireland on the question of Home Rule when they had taken steps to consult them on the matter under discussion; but even then he ventured to think the Gentlemen who were notoriously nominated by a committee — which, though it might be either small or large, was not the constituency of Ireland — had no right to assume to speak in the name of the entire people. He would not venture to speak for the portion of Ireland which he had the honour to represent, because he had not evolved out of his own inner consciousness what their opinion would be. He did not assume to have the gift of prophecy, as hon. Members opposite did; but he believed if the question were put before them they would one and all be decidedly in favour of the provisions of the Bill being extended to Ireland. When he practised at the Bar he considered the want of such a provision a fatal defect in the English Law as compared with that of other countries. He hoped no representation of the supposed opinion of Ireland would prevent the Government pushing the Bill through for the whole Kingdom.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange), said, it seemed to him that there was a fallacy lurking under the arguments of the opponents of the Amendment,

which ought to be put plainly before the House. It was said to Liberals that if they accepted the principle of the measure for England, they must be wrong and inconsistent in supporting the Amendment; because if the principle was good for one case, it must necessarily be good in the other. That seemed to him (Mr. Neville) to be fallacious, for this reason; because he did not think that by accepting the principle of the measure they committed themselves to the opinion that it was a principle to be applied to all places and under all circumstances. There could be no doubt that, originally, the exemption of prisoners from giving evidence was intended to be for the protection of the prisoner. He had not such a low opinion of our legal ancestors as to suppose they were utterly wrong in the view they took at the time of what was for the prisoner's benefit, or that the prisoner would have been better if he had in old days been allowed to give evidence in England. The reason why he and he believed the majority of the English Liberal Members on that side of the House would support the measure, was because they believed, in the existing circumstances of England, it would be for the benefit of innocent persons who might be accused of crimes, because they and most of the English people had full confidence in the administration of justice in that country; and if they took the opinion of those persons who might be in the position of being tried before a Judge and jury in an English Court, they would tell them they were perfectly satisfied that they would get a fair trial. He was not there to say the contrary was the fact in Ireland. It would be utterly presumptuous for him to say anything on the question, for he did not profess to have any personal knowledge of the administration of justice in Ireland; but he would say that it was not a question for English Members to decide. He could not conceive with what object the Representatives of the Irish people were there, if the House was always to turn a deaf ear to those Representatives and to the feelings and wishes of the people of Ireland. The hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) had characterized the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James)

Mr. Neville

as extraordinary. He (Mr. Neville) was not surprised at that statement, because it appeared to him that the Solicitor General did not in the least understand what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury's argument was. That did not astonish him (Mr. Neville), because that right hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking from a standpoint which unfortunately hon. Members opposite seemed perfectly unable of taking up for themselves. What he understood the right hon. and learned Member for Bury to mean was, that the reason why he supported the measure before the House—and he had himself brought in a measure to the same effect on a former occasion—was that he believed it would be in the interests of innocent persons accused of crime; but he did not for a moment conceal from himself, or from the House, that if the giving of evidence by prisoners was something liable to abuse, it might be used against the interests of the innocent person accused of crime. And though he had perfect confidence that in this country it would not be so, and though he knew that the mass of the people in the country so regarded the question, he understood from the Irish Members that that was not the point of view adopted by the Irish people, and, therefore, without expressing any opinion himself as to whether or not there was any truth in the allegation that there was a difference in the atmosphere of the Criminal Courts in England and in Ireland, he said it was enough for his argument if the Representatives of the Irish people said so. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury said that if the Irish representation meant anything at all, it meant that great attention should be paid to the views of the Representatives of the Irish people; and in a case in which they were dealing with the interests of the Irish people, and in which the interests of the country were not suffered to enter, he would give way to their opinion, and would not be a party to forcing what was brought forward as a remedial measure upon the Irish people in the teeth of their Representatives. The argument advanced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, he thought, proved clear and convincing to many Members on both sides of the House. It had been said by Members on the Go-

vernment side of the House that the worse the atmosphere of the Courts, the more important the application of this measure to Ireland. He did not think such a position could be honestly and sincerely maintained. He did not believe for one moment that if the Representatives of the English constituencies had not unbounded faith in the fairness of criminal trials as they take place in this country, they would get a single man to vote for any alteration in the law, and they understood from the Irish Members that, unfortunately, they did not take the same view of criminal prosecutions in Ireland. The reason why he ventured to protest against the course adopted by the Government was, that it seemed to him that, in habitually neglecting the representations of the Irish Members, and refusing them a share in the boons in which they asked to be permitted to share, and insisting on their being partakers in a measure which they had resisted as strongly as they could, they took a course which could not lead to the reasonable and just government of Ireland. He would add his humble voice to those already raised on his side in urging the Government, even now, to pass the measure as one applying to England only, and not to insist on forcing it on Ireland. If the Government persisted in the course they had adopted, they were only putting one further argument in the hands of their opponents as showing that they were determined to proceed in a course of utter disregard to the representations of the Irish people whenever they submitted them to that House.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, that it seemed to him that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in introducing this Bill had hardly given to the House the idea that he was dealing with a Bill of any importance. He introduced it in a few words, and even in those he seemed to deal not only with assumptions, but with what appeared to be false arguments. This Bill—this precious document—had been 20 years hatching, and, remembering that fact, anyone would have expected it to be a very perfect one when produced, but they had just heard from a Scotch Member that it would be absolutely unworkable without the introduction of a new section into the Scotch Procedure Act. He (Mr. Chance) looked upon this

measure as one to compel a prisoner to give evidence on his trial, and not only that, but also to give evidence on preliminary proceedings. Although under the law, as it at present stood, a prisoner might reserve his defence without any observation being made upon the fact, in the future, if this Bill became law, he would be put in the position that the magistrate presiding at the hearing of the charge against him might inform him that if he were an innocent man it was his duty to go into the box, and that if he were not he could adopt the protection which the law gave him and keep out of the box. The result of this would be that they would have jurymen prejudiced against the prisoner in consequence of what took place at the preliminary examination, and even before the trial had taken place. The Attorney General spoke of hardship occurring under the present law. He told them of the case of two prisoners, one of whom was married while the other was not, but lived with a paramour. The married man had not the benefit of his wife's evidence; but the other man had the benefit of evidence given by his paramour. He (Mr. Chance) somewhat irregularly interrupted the hon. and learned Gentleman, and somewhat to his surprise he discovered that the hon. and learned Gentleman had not taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the result of the trial. It seemed to him, therefore, that the case did not afford an illustration of any hardship. There might have been hardship if the hon. and learned Gentleman had gone on to tell the House that the married man was convicted and that the other man, who had the benefit of his paramour's evidence, escaped. The Attorney General then fell back upon the favourite argument of the Front Bench; for he told them that the Judges were in favour of this change. He (Mr. Chance) did not know that Judges, in dealing with changes of the law, had been celebrated for their wisdom or the large-mindedness of their views. It was mentioned in the House last session that Judges were unanimously opposed to the alteration of the law which would prevent men being hanged for thefts of goods worth 5s. and upwards. The Judges then prophesied that there would be an enormous increase of offences against property; but when, in face of

their opposition, the cruel and contemptible law of that time was changed, no evil results were known to follow. He thought that in moving the second reading of a Bill of this kind the Attorney General might have found some better advocates than the Judges. Now, he came to the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), who made what he must undoubtedly call one of those able speeches which were more suitable for the atmosphere of a Court of Justice with a jury in the box than for the atmosphere of the House of Commons. Curiously enough, the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was the first example of the evil operation of this Bill, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was ill-advised enough to get, so to speak, in the witness-box to defend and explain his own position, and, therefore, he was pounced upon by the Solicitor General, who showed, to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of the Supporters of the Government, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury had damaged his case and deserved the verdict to go against him. The Solicitor General spoke of the difference between the atmosphere of an English Law Court and that of an Irish Law Court; but the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman amounted to this—that because he could prophecy that this Bill would be good for England it should therefore be good for Ireland. His own observations, however, were more or less destructive of his argument, because he commenced by assuming, in his own favour, an absolute unanimous opinion in favour of this Bill. He should have gone on to show that the conditions under which law was administered in Ireland were the same as those under which law was administered in England; but he did no such thing. It seemed to him (Mr. Chance) that it rested with the supporters of this Bill to make out a case for it in Ireland; but they totally ignored that branch of their duty, and they wandered away into the most vague and extraordinary assumptions. It was a curious fact that the most strenuous supporters of this Bill were utterly ignorant of the proceedings in Courts of Justice in Ireland. If they knew as much as he and his hon. Friends did of

Mr. Chance

those proceedings, their advocacy of the extension of this Bill to Ireland would be much less powerful than it was. Certainly there was one Irish lawyer put up to speak in favour of this Bill—namely, the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), but the hon. and learned Gentleman knew very little indeed of the administration of Criminal Law in Ireland; happily for himself, up to the present he had been engaged in the serene and calm atmosphere of the Equity Courts. He (Mr. Chance) did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman had ever defended a prisoner in his life; certainly, he had never acted as a Crown Prosecutor. Therefore, it seemed that the evidence in favour of the Bill given upon the Government side of the House was notable for the fact that the Gentlemen who gave that evidence knew nothing about the subject. What was the reason for this new-born zeal for the administration of law in Ireland, and for the protection of Irish prisoners? During the whole of last Session and the Session before the House was wearied by statements from the Treasury Bench that prisoners in Ireland could not be convicted; but tonight he had not heard from the Treasury Bench of any case in which a prisoner was convicted when he was innocent of the crime he was accused of. The attitude had been to assume that in every case when a prisoner was convicted he was convicted properly. In such circumstances it could not be surprising that Members of the House who sat upon the Irish Benches looked with a certain degree of suspicion upon this new-born zeal in the interests of prisoners in Ireland on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite. If they were so zealous and so desirous of improving the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland, he advised them to keep the pledges they made in this House, and not to continue under the stigma of being guilty of what was described in the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) as a dishonourable breach of faith. The administration of law would be less unsatisfactory if, in the first place, there were appeals from magistrates who were not only removable, but Executive officers; and if, in the second place, the Executive in Ireland, when they desired to procure the conviction

of political opponents, ceased to resort to the disgraceful practice of packing juries. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University (Mr. Madden) had still another argument. He said that even granting that justice was not satisfactorily administered in Ireland, the right which this Bill gave would be a protection for the prisoner—that it would be a weapon which would aid in the execution of justice, and therefore no one ought to grumble at that. That argument seemed to him (Mr. Chance) to be based on a somewhat curious fallacy. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that the sharper the weapon, independent of the hands that had to wield it, the better it was for the administration of justice. That would be all very well if the people had confidence in the administration of law in Ireland; but, not having that confidence, it seemed to him to be a curious argument that the sharper the weapon, and the more powerful the means of conviction you put into the hands of Crown lawyers, the more certain it would be that justice would be done. The argument was illogical, and completely at variance with the rest of the arguments advanced from the other side. He thought he could throw a little light upon the real reason why Ireland had been included in this Bill. When this Bill came on for discussion late last Session there was a very vigorous opposition to it from these Benches, and the result was that it did not pass either for Ireland or for England; and he had reason to suppose last year that the punishment which would be inflicted by Her Majesty's Government for their action would be to insist, in spite of any argument adduced in this House, that this Bill should operate in Ireland as well as in England. That was the real or one of the real reasons of the persistence of the Government in forcing this Bill down their throats. The second reason was that, in accordance with the policy which was now fashionable on the Benches opposite, the Government desired to give the Irish Members a snub. He passed from that, however, because it was not worthy of very considerable mention; but the last and gravest reason was the desire of the Government, that men of the type of Cecil Roche and other gentlemen who wielded judicial powers in Ireland, should

have an opportunity of proving their zeal for the maintenance of law and order by cross-examining and torturing prisoners, by commenting in severe language upon their refusal to criminate themselves, or upon their refusal to subject themselves and their evidence to the strongest observations on the part of Crown lawyers. What would be the benefit to a prisoner in Ireland of any evidence given by him? It was obvious that if the prisoner went into the witness-box his evidence would be divided into two parts—the first part would be the evidence in his own favour, and as to that there would be an argument of undeniable weight and force used against him. The Crown would say, and say with great force and truth, that where a man was on his trial, the result of which might be that he would be imprisoned for 10, 15, or 20 years, or, perhaps, for life, he had the very strongest possible interest in making out the best case he could; and they would say that, under such conditions, the sanctity of an oath could not weigh very much with him; that he had most overpowering reasons for perjuring himself, and therefore anything said in his own favour must be pooh-poohed, and must not be considered by the jury. On the other hand, the most trivial particular in which the prisoner disagreed from his own witnesses would be given enormous significance to discredit them, the Crown officials would say—"This is a man who has the greatest interest in procuring his own acquittal, and he is a man who must know the facts of the case." For these reasons, stated as briefly as he could state them, he certainly strongly protested against this Bill being applied to Ireland, but even though Her Majesty's Government might not be inclined to admit the validity of these reasons, he thought it would be but a very small concession on their part to let this Bill have a fair trial in England before applying it to Ireland. In spite of all prophecies the Bill might not be quite successful, and it was only a reasonable thing that this new medicine should be tried in the country where there was some confidence in the administration of the law and the constitution had strength to bear the experiment even if unsuccessful, leaving it to be extended hereafter to a country in which

there was not such confidence, if its operation proved beneficial.

MR. PARNELL (Cork) : Mr. Speaker

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he considered the subject had been now sufficiently discussed, and that it must be generally felt that the time had now arrived when he was justified in claiming the right to move that "the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided :—Ayes 160 ; Noes 111 : Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

MR. PARNELL (Cork) : I beg, Mr. Speaker, to submit to you a question on a point of Order. I submit, Sir, that under the Rule, while you are able and compelled to put the Question regarding the Amendment which is now under discussion, and which you have put without permitting any further discussion on that Question, yet that when the time comes for you to put the Question upon the Original Question—that is, that the Bill be now read a second time—it is within your competency to allow further discussion if you should think fit, upon that Question, and I wish to give you Notice that I shall claim the right, subject to your permission, to discuss the Question when you put the Main Question.

[No reply.]

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes 173 ; Noes 119 : Majority 54.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.	Bigwood, J.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.	Birkbeck, Sir E.
Ambrose, W.	Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Amherst, W. A. T.	Bond, G. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.	Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Baird, J. G. A.	Brookfield, A. M.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.	Bruce, Lord II.
Barry, A. H. Smith-	Burdett-Coutts, W. L.
Bartley, G. C. T.	Ash.-B.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.	Burghley, Lord
Bates, Sir E.	Campbell, Sir A.
Beach, right hon. Sir	Campbell, J. A.
M. E. Hicks	Carmarthen, Marq. of
Beaumont, H. F.	Charrington, S.
Bective, Earl of	Clarke, Sir E. G.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.	Coghill, D. H.
Bethell, Commander G.	Corry, Sir J. P.
R.	

Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.	Hunt, F. S.
Cross, H. S.	Jackson, W. L.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.	Jarvis, A. W.
Darling, C. J.	Johnston, W.
Davenport, H. T.	Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.	Ker, R. W. B.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.	Kerans, F. H.
De Worms, Baron H.	King, H. S.
Dimsdale, Baron R.	Knowles, L.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.	Lafone, A.
Dorington, Sir J. E.	Lambert, C.
Duncan, Colonel F.	Lawrence, W. F.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.	Lees, E.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.	Legh, T. W.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.	Lennox, Lord W. C.
Elcho, Lord	Gordon-
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.	Lewisham, right hon.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.	Viscount
Ellis, Sir J. W.	Llewellyn, E. H.
Ewart, Sir W.	Long, W. H.
Eyre, Colonel H.	Low, M.
Farquharson, H. R.	Macartney, W. G. E.
Fellowes, A. E.	Macdonald, right hon.
Fergusson, right hon.	J. H. A.
Sir J.	Maclean, F. W.
Finch, G. H.	Maclure, J. W.
Finlay, R. B.	McCalmont, Captain J.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.	Madden, D. H.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen.	Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Sir F. W.	Mallock, R.
Folkestone, right hon.	Maple, J. B.
Viscount	Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Forwood, A. B.	Maskelyne, M. H. N.
Fowler, Sir R. N.	Story-
Fraser, General C. C.	Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Fulton, J. F.	Mattinson, M. W.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon.	Maxwell, Sir H. E.
A. E.	Mills, hon. C. W.
Gedge, S.	Milvain, T.
Gilliat, J. S.	Morrison, W.
Godson, A. F.	Moss, R.
Goldsworthy, Major-	Mount, W. G.
General W. T.	Mulholland, H. L.
Gorst, Sir J. E.	Newark, Viscount
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.	Noble, W.
Granby, Marquess of	Norris, E. S.
Gray, C. W.	Norton, R.
Grimston, Viscount	O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Grottrian, F. B.	Parker, hon. F.
Hamilton, right hon.	Parker, C. S.
Lord G. F.	Pearce, Sir W.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.	Plunket, rt. hon. D. B.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.	Powell, F. S.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.	Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Hanbury, R. W.	Robertson, J. P. B.
Hankey, F. A.	Robinson, B.
Hastings, G. W.	Royden, T. B.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H.	Russell, Sir G.
Edwards-	Russell, T. W.
Heaton, J. H.	Salt, T.
Herbert, hon. S.	Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Hervey, Lord F.	Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Hill, right hon. Lord	Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
A. W.	Sidebotham, J. W.
Hoare, E. B.	Sidebottom, W.
Hoare, S.	Sinclair, W. P.
Holloway, G.	Smith, rt. hon. W. H.-
Howard, J.	Smith, A.
Hozier, J. H. C.	Stanley, E. J.
Hubbard, hon. E.	Talbot, J. G.
Hughes, Colonel E.	Taylor, F.
Hughes-Hallett, Col.	Temple, Sir R.
F. C.	Tollemache, H. J.

Sir H. W. Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Colonel T. Yerburch, R. A.
, J.
r, Sir R. E. TELLERS.
J. B. Douglas, A. Akers-
r, Viscount Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

A. H. D. Kenny, J. E.
R. A. Kilbride, D.
on, C. H. Lalor, R.
A. Lawson, Sir W.
y-Jones, L. Leahy, J.
J. Lewis, T. P.
rt. hon. J. B. Lockwood, F.
ine, W. H. W. McDonald, P.
r, W. B. McLaren, W. S. B.
J. Mahony, P.
ont, W. B. Mayne, T.
J. O. Morley, right hon. J.
gh, C. Morley, A.
W. L. Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
A. L. Murphy, W. M.
r, J. T. Neville, R.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
n, J. M. O'Brien, J. F. X.
ll, H. O'Brien, P. J.
i, R. K. O'Brien, W.
P. A. O'Connor, A.
J. J. O'Connor, J.
Dr. G. B. O'Hea, P.
ge, hon. B. O'Kelly, J.
T. J. Parnell, C. S.
r, M. Paulton, J. M.
W. J. Pease, A. E.
n, H. Provand, A. D.
R. Pyne, J. D.
Hardy, H. II. Quinn, T.
D. Redmond, W. H. K.
y, E. Roberts, J. B.
J. Roberts, J.
a, L. L. Rowlands, J.
E. Rowntree, J.
k, C. Russell, Sir C.
e, J. Samuelson, G. B.
J. F. B. Sheehan, J. D.
C. Spencer, hon. C. R.
J. C. Stack, J.
P. J. Stewart, H.
r, J. F. Sullivan, D.
G. P. Sutherland, A.
y, J. Swinburne, Sir J.
P. Tanner, C. K.
r, E. T. Thomas, D. A.
Sir E. Trevelyan, right hon.
e, R. B. Sir G. O.
rt, rt. hon. Sir Tuite, J.
V. V. Warmington, C. M.
M. Wayman, T.
C. Seale- Will, J. S.
M. Williamson, S.
T. M. Wilson, H. J.
y, B. Winterbotham, A. B.
W. A. Woodhead, J.
J. Wright, C.
ly, E. J. TELLERS.
C. S. Biggar, J. G.
Carow, J. L.

n Question, "That the Bill be read
ird time," put.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a few words in view of the decision which the House has just come to—that the Bill shall apply to Ireland—upon the general application of the measure, but more especially upon its application to Ireland, and in doing so I shall endeavour to keep myself strictly within the Order of the Rules of the House and to refrain from discussing even incidentally any matter which would be more properly discussed upon the Amendment which the House has just decided upon adversely to our views and to our wishes. But perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to say generally that I greatly regret that I did not have an opportunity of speaking upon that Amendment. I was a Member of the Grand Committee which, in 1884, sat upon a measure of a similar character to this. It is a question that I have always taken a great deal of interest in, and there are several special reasons on account of which I think I might have been afforded an opportunity of speaking my views upon the immediate question which was then under discussion of the application of this measure to Ireland. However, Sir, that is a matter which has been decided upon by the House. It is past and gone, and I will only say regarding it, that I trust that when the Bill gets into Committee the Government may see fit to re-consider their decision, which may, perhaps, have been rather hastily arrived at to-night without full consideration of all the various aspects of the question, and that they may be led, as the result of the re-consideration, to treat the Bill as a purely English measure, and as one in which we consequently need not take that interest which we are so unfortunately compelled to take in many measures which are brought forward by the Government, and proposed to be extended to Ireland. I had hoped and was most desirous that the pledge the Government gave at the commencement of this Session, that this was to be a British Session, should be kept, and I think it is most unfortunate that, except in a case of absolute and urgent necessity, such as the measure brought forward yesterday, and which, if it were agreed to, we should not have trespassed on the Government for any facilities whatever in getting through its Committee stage. I have been most anxious that this Session should be a Session of

incredible principles of English law, and when this Bill was passed the country would wonder that that superstition had continued so long. The principle of the Bill was that the mouth of a prisoner should no longer be shut, but that he should have an opportunity—he did not say should be compelled, for he did not know how they could compel a man to speak, as they did not apply the torture now-a-days—of giving his own version of the circumstances which had led to his prosecution; that, in fact, he should be invited to speak. But he doubted whether the principle of the Bill was put before the House in a right form. He had had great experience in dealing with the system under which prisoners were examined, and his own impression was that the form in which the Bill was put before the House now, and had been put before the House on previous occasions as applicable to England, was not the right form. He dissented from the view that they could not put before a Court of Law evidence which was not sworn. The examination of a prisoner should be a judicial examination of an accused person and not the examination of a witness. That was the law which prevailed in all countries except England and the United States of America, which drew their law from English law. It was the case in Scotland. It was proposed to apply the Bill to Scotland, but it seemed to him that it would be very difficult to do so in its present form, because they already had an examination of an accused person in Scotland. In Scotland they had never shut the mouth of an accused person, but, on the contrary, had always invited him to make a statement or a declaration. The first thing which happened when an accused person was brought before a Justice in Scotland was his being invited to make, what they called, a declaration, and this form constituted nothing more nor less than a judicial examination of that accused person. He had also had some experience of the working of this principle of law in India. In that country they had the advantage, not of an antiquated law such as prevailed in England, but of the most modern law made by the most modern Jurists, and what were the provisions of this Code in regard to the matter under discussion. Why, in this Code they had nothing of the nature of

the accused person appearing as a witness, but they had a judicial examination of an accused person. That was the law of India and that was the law of Europe, including Scotland, and it seemed to him that it was the law of all countries that were not prejudiced by English law. It seemed to him that if they adopted this system of determining by law that a man's mouth should only be open when he appeared as a witness on oath in a case, they would be involving themselves in a very great difficulty. They might make provision by law, in the manner proposed by the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), to prevent the refusal or the assent of an accused person to give evidence being cited in the case against him. After all, that might be the law, but they could not prevent the minds of the jury being influenced, as they would be reasonably influenced, by the fact that an accused person had not come forward to give his own statement of the case. That being the case, it seemed to him that a prisoner would be practically forced to make a statement, and it appeared to him (Sir George Campbell) that it would be very right that so much compulsion should be applied. It was right in the interest of the innocent and the guilty alike that a certain moral compulsion should be exercised upon the accused in order to get them to make statements and say what was their account of the matter; but it seemed to him, to be placing a man in a very peculiar position to insist upon his taking an oath. It was all very well to do so, perhaps, and to adopt the existing system in cases of secondary degree; but when they came to cases such as murder, he asked, was it right or fair that they should drive a man to come forward and say upon oath whether he had committed the crime or not? That would operate as an irresistible temptation to a man guilty of murder to add to the peril in which he stood as to his life, peril to his soul, by perjury. The kind of judicial examination he referred to would be more efficacious in getting out the truth than any forcing of a man to make a statement on oath. He thought some matters would have to be settled in regard to the Bill. At present, apart from the giving of evidence on oath, it was doubtful whether or not a prisoner could make a statement in his own do-

Sir George Campbell

fence. The practice of English Judges varied very much in that respect, some Judges permitting it and others refusing to do so. It was desirable that that question should be settled, and, for his own part, he was anxious to see it settled in the direction of allowing a prisoner to make a statement in his own defence. He thought that the Bill should be read a second time, but that it should be considerably modified, and perhaps it might be so modified.

SIR WILLIAM EWART (Belfast, N.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) had assumed too much that Irish opinion was in favour of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). On the contrary, he (Sir William Ewart) had no doubt that the overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland would hail with pleasure the passing of this measure. What was this Bill? It was simply a Bill enabling a prisoner to give evidence, if he wished, and enabling a husband or wife to give evidence in a case against the other. He confessed that he had heard with some surprise the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. After this question had been so thoroughly thrashed out, and public opinion had been so fully formed upon it, he thought the hon. Gentleman was very bold in coming forward practically to offer it opposition, and especially when he himself had said that there was really no difference of opinion as to the passing of the measure for the United Kingdom. No case had been made out, to his (Sir William Ewart's) mind, for excluding Ireland from the operations of the Bill. The opposition had entirely failed; indeed the reasons given by the hon. and learned Member for Longford were altogether in favour of the Bill. If the Irish Judges were corrupt—which he indignantly denied—it was all the more important and needful that it should be in the power of the accused to clear himself. He was, as far as possible, in favour of equal laws for all parts of the United Kingdom, and on every occasion, as far as possible, he should give his support to equal laws. On the present occasion he had much pleasure in supporting the application of

the Bill to the whole of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he felt bound, on behalf of the constituency that he had the honour to represent, to enter his protest against this Bill. He believed that it contained a very dangerous principle. He was against the principle of the Bill altogether, but he was especially against it on account of the proposal to extend it to Ireland. He thought the Bill a mistake, and it seemed to him, in his humble judgment, a rather curious thing that the producers and the supporters of it during the whole course of the debate, though it was a Bill proposing to introduce into English law a principle accepted elsewhere, say in France, had never produced anything like an array of testimony to show from experience that the principle was one which worked to the approval of the lawyers of France or other countries. In his opinion, and he thought this would be borne out by everyone who had followed even recently the course of certain trials in France, the principle of this Bill was one which, at any rate in France, had not been an unmixed good. The principle they were about to give up, that of excluding a prisoner from making a statement or submitting himself to cross-examination, had, no doubt, a great many drawbacks. He should like to know any human principle that had not; but had the principle they were proposing to introduce no drawbacks? He held that it had, and very decided ones. He believed that the principle of making the Judge a seeker out of evidence, and an examiner of a prisoner as a witness in a case, was one which would interfere very seriously with that judicial and impartial frame of mind which had so distinguished the English Judges. That judicial and impartial frame of mind had raised the English Judges above the Judges of any other country in the world. The English Judges remained in a higher atmosphere, and, if they were asked to step down from that higher atmosphere and to examine prisoners, the effect would be to interfere with that judicial frame of mind which had always characterized them. Look at any trial in France—at the Pranzini trial for instance. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) had read the manner in which the Judge

at that trial examined and cross-examined and bullied and threatened that prisoner. It was the most scandalous thing that ever occurred. The Judge taunted the man with keeping back the truth. He said—"You were cruel to your mother, why should you not be cruel to your mistress?" and so on. Then look at the still more recent case, the Vignor affair, in connection with the trial of M. Wilson. They had there the Judge d'Instruction, who entertained at dinner one of the defendants in the case. He gave the man a rich dinner, and plied him with wine, and over the walnuts and the wine he succeeded in extracting damaging information from him, and after that he talked over the telephone wire with another of the defendants, changing his voice and pretending he was M. Wilson. Why did he do that? Why, because in France the constant effect of this system on the judicial frame of mind had been to transform the Judge more or less into a seeker out of evidence and a runner down of the prisoner. The glory of a Judge in France consisted, just as much as if he were a Crown Prosecutor in bringing a prisoner to conviction. That Judge had carried the thing so far that it became a public scandal, and he was dismissed from his office. That was only a few weeks ago, but let them take any trial that occurred in France, and they would find that a Judge in France behaved on the Bench in the manner in which he examined a prisoner and ran him down, in a way which would be shocking to the sentiments which had grown up in England with regard to the course of law. He (Mr. T. P. Gill) further said that the principle was a dangerous one, though they were rushing upon it with a light heart. The House seemed to be taking for granted that it was all very fine. He had no doubt that there was a great deal to be said for it, and that there were a great many cases in which justice would benefit by having this principle in force, but he thought that the cases in which it would do an injury to the cause of justice, and create almost a scandal, would be more numerous still. He did not think the House had properly weighed the pros and cons of the case. That being so as to the principle generally, how much more were the Members for Ireland justified in oppo-

Mr. T. P. Gill

sing the application of such a principle to Ireland. The Judges in England, and the Crown Prosecutors in England, as had been universally conceded, lived in a higher atmosphere, in a more impartial, a more calm, and a more just atmosphere than the Judges and Crown Prosecutors in Ireland; and if this practice of allowing a Judge to cross-examine a prisoner, and to sift his evidence, were injurious in the case of men who were entirely impartial and lived in an impartial atmosphere, what would be the effect in Ireland on Judges who were simply fresh from being Crown Prosecutors and reeking with an atmosphere like that of Green Street? He knew a case where a man was tried for his life—the Gould case. The Crown Prosecutor did his best to get Gould convicted. He made a most eloquent denunciation of the prisoner on his first trial. The prisoner came up for trial a second time, and the Crown Prosecutor, who prosecuted him on the first trial, was sitting on the Bench in the case of the second trial. Fancy a case like that. In Ireland they had such jobbery and partizanship in connection with the administration of the law that even a Judge failed to see any impropriety in sitting on the Bench and trying a prisoner on a second trial whom he had himself prosecuted on his first trial. Could such a thing occur in England? He ventured to say that no one could get up and contend that it could. To say that they were introducing on equal terms a principle such as that contained in the Bill into England and Ireland was to make a most monstrous and unjustifiable assertion. The whole course of feeling in Courts of Justice in Ireland was that both the Judge on the Bench—this might be an injustice to a great many of the Judges in Ireland, but let that be as it might—the feeling was that both the Judges on the Bench and the Crown Prosecutors were excessively anxious to obtain convictions. The belief in the popular mind was that when a man was unfortunate enough to get into the Dock there under any circumstance whatever, the only person not bent on running the prisoner to earth was the counsel engaged in his defence. In this country he believed that a Crown Prosecutor would occasionally give up his brief when he was convinced that a prisoner was inno-

cent. ["No, no!"] Well, some hon. Member said that. ["No, no!"] Well, someone had said the converse of that at any rate, that was to say, that the counsel for a guilty person would sometimes give up his brief when he thought the prisoner guilty, and it was only fair to assume that where an opposing advocate thought a person innocent he would also be moved to throw up his brief. They might, however, live till doomsday before they would see such a thing as that occur in Ireland. As had been stated in a newspaper article not long ago, the whole purpose of an Irish Crown Prosecutor was to get a verdict, hook or by crook. The gentlemen on the Bench in Ireland were gentlemen who had stepped up from the position of Crown Prosecutor to that of Judge, and, that being so, it appeared to him that a case of irresistible force had been made out against the introduction of the principle contained in the Bill in Ireland. He thought it an unwise principle, and one the advantages of which would not come near to overpowering its disadvantages. In the case of Ireland there was no reason whatsoever why this principle should be thrust down the throats of the Irish people against the wishes of the vast majority of their Representatives. Goodness only knew that they had had instances enough in which the inequalities existing between the two countries had been exemplified of late, and it appeared to him that the House of Commons was making itself absolutely grotesque by these contradictions. There had been three measures introduced into the House of Commons within the space of some months. One of these proposed to make a tremendous change in the law of Ireland, but it did not propose to apply the same change to England. Another of these measures proposed to make a radical extension of liberty in England and not to extend it to Ireland; and now the Government brought forward a proposal which they said was good for England and they gratuitously proposed to extend it to Ireland, although the Irish Members entreated them with all the warmth they could command not to do so. In spite of the wishes of the Irish people the measure was to be thrust down their throats. He thought that the most prejudiced mind in the House would agree that there was a gross disregard of popu-

lar opinion in Ireland in this House when it sought so to legislate. He should hope that the protest the Irish Members had made to-night would have some effect on the Government, though he was afraid he was much too sanguine in entertaining such a view. At any rate, disregarded as his opinion might be on the question, he had felt it to be his duty, and he distinctly agreed with all his Colleagues in giving a most determined opposition to the application of this Bill to Ireland.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, that the argument of the depravity of the French Courts did not apply in the smallest degree to the present case, because it was not proposed to put in the power of any Judge to cross-examine a prisoner under any circumstances whatever. He rose principally to protest against the universal assumption of hon. Members below the Gangway to speak for the people of Ireland. It was enough for them to express the opinion of the people of Ireland on the question of Home Rule when they had taken steps to consult them on the matter under discussion; but even then he ventured to think the Gentlemen who were notoriously nominated by a committee — which, though it might be either small or large, was not the constituency of Ireland — had no right to assume to speak in the name of the entire people. He would not venture to speak for the portion of Ireland which he had the honour to represent, because he had not evolved out of his own inner consciousness what their opinion would be. He did not assume to have the gift of prophecy, as hon. Members opposite did; but he believed if the question were put before them they would one and all be decidedly in favour of the provisions of the Bill being extended to Ireland. When he practised at the Bar he considered the want of such a provision a fatal defect in the English Law as compared with that of other countries. He hoped no representation of the supposed opinion of Ireland would prevent the Government pushing the Bill through for the whole Kingdom.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange), said, it seemed to him that there was a fallacy lurking under the arguments of the opponents of the Amendment,

which ought to be put plainly before the House. It was said to Liberals that if they accepted the principle of the measure for England, they must be wrong and inconsistent in supporting the Amendment; because if the principle was good for one case, it must necessarily be good in the other. That seemed to him (Mr. Neville) to be fallacious, for this reason; because he did not think that by accepting the principle of the measure they committed themselves to the opinion that it was a principle to be applied to all places and under all circumstances. There could be no doubt that, originally, the exemption of prisoners from giving evidence was intended to be for the protection of the prisoner. He had not such a low opinion of our legal ancestors as to suppose they were utterly wrong in the view they took at the time of what was for the prisoner's benefit, or that the prisoner would have been better if he had in old days been allowed to give evidence in England. The reason why he and he believed the majority of the English Liberal Members on that side of the House would support the measure, was because they believed, in the existing circumstances of England, it would be for the benefit of innocent persons who might be accused of crimes, because they and most of the English people had full confidence in the administration of justice in that country; and if they took the opinion of those persons who might be in the position of being tried before a Judge and jury in an English Court, they would tell them they were perfectly satisfied that they would get a fair trial. He was not there to say the contrary was the fact in Ireland. It would be utterly presumptuous for him to say anything on the question, for he did not profess to have any personal knowledge of the administration of justice in Ireland; but he would say that it was not a question for English Members to decide. He could not conceive with what object the Representatives of the Irish people were there, if the House was always to turn a deaf ear to those Representatives and to the feelings and wishes of the people of Ireland. The hon. and learned Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke) had characterized the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James)

Mr. Neville

as extraordinary. He (Mr. Neville) was not surprised at that statement, because it appeared to him that the Solicitor General did not in the least understand what the right hon. and learned Member for Bury's argument was. That did not astonish him (Mr. Neville), because that right hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking from a standpoint which unfortunately hon. Members opposite seemed perfectly unable of taking up for themselves. What he understood the right hon. and learned Member for Bury to mean was, that the reason why he supported the measure before the House—and he had himself brought in a measure to the same effect on a former occasion—was that he believed it would be in the interests of innocent persons accused of crime; but he did not for a moment conceal from himself, or from the House, that if the giving of evidence by prisoners was something liable to abuse, it might be used against the interests of the innocent person accused of crime. And though he had perfect confidence that in this country it would not be so, and though he knew that the mass of the people in the country so regarded the question, he understood from the Irish Members that that was not the point of view adopted by the Irish people, and, therefore, without expressing any opinion himself as to whether or not there was any truth in the allegation that there was a difference in the atmosphere of the Criminal Courts in England and in Ireland, he said it was enough for his argument if the Representatives of the Irish people said so. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury said that if the Irish representation meant anything at all, it meant that great attention should be paid to the views of the Representatives of the Irish people; and in a case in which they were dealing with the interests of the Irish people, and in which the interests of the country were not suffered to enter, he would give way to their opinion, and would not be a party to forcing what was brought forward as a remedial measure upon the Irish people in the teeth of their Representatives. The argument advanced by the right hon. and learned Gentleman had, he thought, proved clear and convincing to many Members on both sides of the House. It had been said by Members on the Go-

vernment side of the House that the worse the atmosphere of the Courts, the more important the application of this measure to Ireland. He did not think such a position could be honestly and sincerely maintained. He did not believe for one moment that if the Representatives of the English constituencies had not unbounded faith in the fairness of criminal trials as they take place in this country, they would get a single man to vote for any alteration in the law, and they understood from the Irish Members that, unfortunately, they did not take the same view of criminal prosecutions in Ireland. The reason why he ventured to protest against the course adopted by the Government was, that it seemed to him that, in habitually neglecting the representations of the Irish Members, and refusing them a share in the boons in which they asked to be permitted to share, and insisting on their being partakers in a measure which they had resisted as strongly as they could, they took a course which could not lead to the reasonable and just government of Ireland. He would add his humble voice to those already raised on his side in urging the Government, even now, to pass the measure as one applying to England only, and not to insist on forcing it on Ireland. If the Government persisted in the course they had adopted, they were only putting one further argument in the hands of their opponents as showing that they were determined to proceed in a course of utter disregard to the representations of the Irish people whenever they submitted them to that House.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, that it seemed to him that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General in introducing this Bill had hardly given to the House the idea that he was dealing with a Bill of any importance. He introduced it in a few words, and even in those he seemed to deal not only with assumptions, but with what appeared to be false arguments. This Bill—this precious document—had been 20 years hatching, and, remembering that fact, anyone would have expected it to be a very perfect one when produced, but they had just heard from a Scotch Member that it would be absolutely unworkable without the introduction of a new section into the Scotch Procedure Act. He (Mr. Chance) looked upon this

measure as one to compel a prisoner to give evidence on his trial, and not only that, but also to give evidence on preliminary proceedings. Although under the law, as it at present stood, a prisoner might reserve his defence without any observation being made upon the fact, in the future, if this Bill became law, he would be put in the position that the magistrate presiding at the hearing of the charge against him might inform him that if he were an innocent man it was his duty to go into the box, and that if he were not he could adopt the protection which the law gave him and keep out of the box. The result of this would be that they would have jurymen prejudiced against the prisoner in consequence of what took place at the preliminary examination, and even before the trial had taken place. The Attorney General spoke of hardship occurring under the present law. He told them of the case of two prisoners, one of whom was married while the other was not, but lived with a paramour. The married man had not the benefit of his wife's evidence; but the other man had the benefit of evidence given by his paramour. He (Mr. Chance) somewhat irregularly interrupted the hon. and learned Gentleman, and somewhat to his surprise he discovered that the hon. and learned Gentleman had not taken the trouble to acquaint himself with the result of the trial. It seemed to him, therefore, that the case did not afford an illustration of any hardship. There might have been hardship if the hon. and learned Gentleman had gone on to tell the House that the married man was convicted and that the other man, who had the benefit of his paramour's evidence, escaped. The Attorney General then fell back upon the favourite argument of the Front Bench; for he told them that the Judges were in favour of this change. He (Mr. Chance) did not know that Judges, in dealing with changes of the law, had been celebrated for their wisdom or the large-mindedness of their views. It was mentioned in the House last session that Judges were unanimously opposed to the alteration of the law which would prevent men being hanged for thefts of goods worth 5s. and upwards. The Judges then prophesied that there would be an enormous increase of offences against property; but when, in face of

their opposition, the cruel and contemptible law of that time was changed, no evil results were known to follow. He thought that in moving the second reading of a Bill of this kind the Attorney General might have found some better advocates than the Judges. Now, he came to the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), who made what he must undoubtedly call one of those able speeches which were more suitable for the atmosphere of a Court of Justice with a jury in the box than for the atmosphere of the House of Commons. Curiously enough, the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was the first example of the evil operation of this Bill, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was ill-advised enough to get, so to speak, in the witness-box to defend and explain his own position, and, therefore, he was pounced upon by the Solicitor General, who showed, to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of the Supporters of the Government, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury had damaged his case and deserved the verdict to go against him. The Solicitor General spoke of the difference between the atmosphere of an English Law Court and that of an Irish Law Court; but the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman amounted to this—that because he could prophecy that this Bill would be good for England it should therefore be good for Ireland. His own observations, however, were more or less destructive of his argument, because he commenced by assuming, in his own favour, an absolute unanimous opinion in favour of this Bill. He should have gone on to show that the conditions under which law was administered in Ireland were the same as those under which law was administered in England; but he did no such thing. It seemed to him (Mr. Chance) that it rested with the supporters of this Bill to make out a case for it in Ireland; but they totally ignored that branch of their duty, and they wandered away into the most vague and extraordinary assumptions. It was a curious fact that the most strenuous supporters of this Bill were utterly ignorant of the proceedings in Courts of Justice in Ireland. If they knew as much as he and his hon. Friends did of

those proceedings, their advocacy of the extension of this Bill to Ireland would be much less powerful than it was. Certainly there was one Irish lawyer put up to speak in favour of this Bill—namely, the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), but the hon. and learned Gentleman knew very little indeed of the administration of Criminal Law in Ireland; happily for himself, up to the present he had been engaged in the serene and calm atmosphere of the Equity Courts. He (Mr. Chance) did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman had ever defended a prisoner in his life; certainly, he had never acted as a Crown Prosecutor. Therefore, it seemed that the evidence in favour of the Bill given upon the Government side of the House was notable for the fact that the Gentlemen who gave that evidence knew nothing about the subject. What was the reason for this new-born zeal for the administration of law in Ireland, and for the protection of Irish prisoners? During the whole of last Session and the Session before the House was wearied by statements from the Treasury Bench that prisoners in Ireland could not be convicted; but to-night he had not heard from the Treasury Bench of any case in which a prisoner was convicted when he was innocent of the crime he was accused of. The attitude had been to assume that in every case when a prisoner was convicted he was convicted properly. In such circumstances it could not be surprising that Members of the House who sat upon the Irish Benches looked with a certain degree of suspicion upon this new-born zeal in the interests of prisoners in Ireland on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite. If they were so zealous and so desirous of improving the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland, he advised them to keep the pledges they made in this House, and not to continue under the stigma of being guilty of what was described in the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) as a dishonourable breach of faith. The administration of law would be less unsatisfactory if, in the first place, there were appeals from magistrates who were not only removable, but Executive officers; and if, in the second place, the Executive in Ireland, when they desired to procure the conviction

Mr. Chance

of political opponents, ceased to resort to the disgraceful practice of packing juries. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University (Mr. Madden) had still another argument. He said that even granting that justice was not satisfactorily administered in Ireland, the right which this Bill gave would be a protection for the prisoner—that it would be a weapon which would aid in the execution of justice, and therefore no one ought to grumble at that. That argument seemed to him (Mr. Chance) to be based on a somewhat curious fallacy. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think that the sharper the weapon, independent of the hands that had to wield it, the better it was for the administration of justice. That would be all very well if the people had confidence in the administration of law in Ireland; but, not having that confidence, it seemed to him to be a curious argument that the sharper the weapon, and the more powerful the means of conviction you put into the hands of Crown lawyers, the more certain it would be that justice would be done. The argument was illogical, and completely at variance with the rest of the arguments advanced from the other side. He thought he could throw a little light upon the real reason why Ireland had been included in this Bill. When this Bill came on for discussion late last Session there was a very vigorous opposition to it from these Benches, and the result was that it did not pass either for Ireland or for England; and he had reason to suppose last year that the punishment which would be inflicted by Her Majesty's Government for their action would be to insist, in spite of any argument adduced in this House, that this Bill should operate in Ireland as well as in England. That was the real or one of the real reasons of the persistence of the Government in forcing this Bill down their throats. The second reason was that, in accordance with the policy which was now fashionable on the Benches opposite, the Government desired to give the Irish Members a snub. He passed from that, however, because it was not worthy of very considerable mention; but the last and gravest reason was the desire of the Government, that men of the type of Cecil Roche and other gentlemen who wielded judicial powers in Ireland, should

have an opportunity of proving their zeal for the maintenance of law and order by cross-examining and torturing prisoners, by commenting in severe language upon their refusal to criminate themselves, or upon their refusal to subject themselves and their evidence to the strongest observations on the part of Crown lawyers. What would be the benefit to a prisoner in Ireland of any evidence given by him? It was obvious that if the prisoner went into the witness-box his evidence would be divided into two parts—the first part would be the evidence in his own favour, and as to that there would be an argument of undeniable weight and force used against him. The Crown would say, and say with great force and truth, that where a man was on his trial, the result of which might be that he would be imprisoned for 10, 15, or 20 years, or, perhaps, for life, he had the very strongest possible interest in making out the best case he could; and they would say that, under such conditions, the sanctity of an oath could not weigh very much with him; that he had most overpowering reasons for perjuring himself, and therefore anything said in his own favour must be pooh-poohed, and must not be considered by the jury. On the other hand, the most trivial particular in which the prisoner disagreed from his own witnesses would be given enormous significance to discredit them, the Crown officials would say—"This is a man who has the greatest interest in procuring his own acquittal, and he is a man who must know the facts of the case." For these reasons, stated as briefly as he could state them, he certainly strongly protested against this Bill being applied to Ireland, but even though Her Majesty's Government might not be inclined to admit the validity of these reasons, he thought it would be but a very small concession on their part to let this Bill have a fair trial in England before applying it to Ireland. In spite of all prophecies the Bill might not be quite successful, and it was only a reasonable thing that this new medicine should be tried in the country where there was some confidence in the administration of the law and the constitution had strength to bear the experiment even if unsuccessful, leaving it to be extended hereafter to a country in which

there was not such confidence, if its operation proved beneficial.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he considered the subject had been now sufficiently discussed, and that it must be generally felt that the time had now arrived when he was justified in claiming the right to move that "the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes 160; Noes 111: Majority 49.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I beg, Mr. Speaker, to submit to you a question on a point of Order. I submit, Sir, that under the Rule, while you are able and compelled to put the Question regarding the Amendment which is now under discussion, and which you have put without permitting any further discussion on that Question, yet that when the time comes for you to put the Question upon the Original Question—that is, that the Bill be now read a second time—it is within your competency to allow further discussion if you should think fit, upon that Question, and I wish to give you Notice that I shall claim the right, subject to your permission, to discuss the Question when you put the Main Question.

[No reply.]

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 173; Noes 119: Majority 54.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.	Bigwood, J.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.	Birkbeck, Sir E.
Ambrose, W.	Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Amherst, W. A. T.	Bond, G. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.	Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Baird, J. G. A.	Brookfield, A. M.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.	Bruce, Lord H.
Barry, A. H. Smith-	Burdett-Coutts, W. L.
Bartley, G. C. T.	Ash.-B.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.	Burghley, Lord
Bates, Sir E.	Campbell, Sir A.
Beach, right hon. Sir	Campbell, J. A.
M. E. Hicks-	Carmarthen, Marq. of
Beaumont, H. F.	Charrington, S.
Bective, Earl of	Clarke, Sir E. G.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.	Coghill, D. H.
Bethell, Commander G.	Corry, Sir J. P.
R.	

Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.	Hunt, F. S.
Cross, H. S.	Jackson, W. L.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.	Jarvis, A. W.
Darling, C. J.	Johnston, W.
Davenport, H. T.	Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Dawney, Col. hn. L. P.	Ker, R. W. B.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.	Kerans, F. H.
De Worms, Baron H.	King, H. S.
Dimsdale, Baron R.	Knowles, L.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.	Lafone, A.
Dorington, Sir J. E.	Lambert, C.
Duncan, Colonel F.	Lawrence, W. F.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.	Lees, E.
Edwards-Moss, T. O.	Lekh, T. W.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.	Lennox, Lord W. C.
Elcho, Lord	Gordon-
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.	Lewisham, right hon.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.	Viscount
Ellis, Sir J. W.	Llewellyn, E. H.
Ewart, Sir W.	Long, W. H.
Eyre, Colonel H.	Low, M.
Farquharson, H. R.	Macartney, W. G. E.
Fellowes, A. E.	Macdonald, right hon.
Fergusson, right hon.	J. H. A.
Sir J.	Maclean, F. W.
Finch, G. H.	Maclure, J. W.
Finlay, R. B.	M'Calmont, Captain J.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.	Madden, D. H.
Fitz - Wygram, Gen.	Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Sir F. W.	Mallock, R.
Folkestone, right hon.	Maple, J. B.
Viscount	Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Forwood, A. B.	Maskelyne, M. H. N.
Fowler, Sir R. N.	Story-
Fraser, General C. O.	Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Fulton, J. F.	Mattinson, M. W.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon.	Maxwell, Sir H. E.
A. E.	Mills, hon. C. W.
Gedge, S.	Milvain, T.
Gilliat, J. S.	Morrison, W.
Godson, A. F.	Moss, R.
Goldsworthy, Major-	Mount, W. G.
General W. T.	Mulholland, H. L.
Gorst, Sir J. E.	Newark, Viscount
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.	Noble, W.
Granby, Marquess of	Norris, E. S.
Gray, C. W.	Norton, R.
Grimston, Viscount	O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Grotian, F. B.	Parker, hon. F.
Hamilton, right hon.	Parker, C. S.
Lord G. F.	Pearce, Sir W.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.	Plunket, rt. hon. D. E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.	Powell, F. S.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.	Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Hanbury, R. W.	Robertson, J. P. B.
Hankey, F. A.	Robinson, B.
Hastings, G. W.	Royden, T. B.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H.	Russell, Sir G.
Edwards-	Russell, T. W.
Heaton, J. H.	Salt, T.
Herbert, hon. S.	Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Hervey, Lord F.	Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Hill, right hon. Lord	Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
A. W.	Sidebotham, J. W.
Hoare, E. B.	Sidebottom, W.
Hoare, S.	Sinclair, W. P.
Holloway, G.	Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Howard, J.	Smith, A.
Hozier, J. H. C.	Stanley, E. J.
Hubbard, hon. E.	Talbot, J. G.
Hughes, Colonel E.	Taylor, F.
Hughes - Hallett, Col.	Temple, Sir R.
F. C.	Tollamache, H. J.

Tyler, Sir H. W.	Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Waring, Colonel T.	Yerburgh, R. A.
Watson, J.	
Webster, Sir R. E.	TELLERS.
White, J. B.	Douglas, A. Akers-
Wolmer, Viscount	Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.	Kenny, J. E.
Allison, R. A.	Kilbride, D.
Anderson, C. H.	Lalor, R.
Asher, A.	Lawson, Sir W.
Atherley-Jones, L.	Leahy, J.
Austin, J.	Lewis, T. P.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.	Lockwood, F.
Ballantine, W. H. W.	M'Donald, P.
Barbour, W. B.	M'Laren, W. S. B.
Barry, J.	Mahony, P.
Beaumont, W. B.	Mayne, T.
Bolton, J. O.	Morley, right hon. J.
Bradlaugh, C.	Morley, A.
Bright, W. L.	Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Brown, A. L.	Murphy, W. M.
Brunner, J. T.	Neville, R.
Burt, T.	Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Caldwell, J.	Nolan, J.
Cameron, J. M.	O'Brien, J. F. X.
Campbell, H.	O'Brien, P. J.
Cauton, R. K.	O'Brien, W.
Chance, P. A.	O'Connor, A.
Clancy, J. J.	O'Connor, J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.	O'Hea, P.
Coleridge, hon. B.	O'Kelly, J.
Condon, T. J.	Parnell, C. S.
Conway, M.	Paulton, J. M.
Corbet, W. J.	Pease, A. E.
Cossham, H.	Provand, A. D.
Cox, J. R.	Pyne, J. D.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.	Quinn, T.
Crilly, D.	Redmond, W. H. K.
Crossley, E.	Roberts, J. B.
Deasy, J.	Roberts, J.
Dillon, J.	Rowlands, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.	Rowntree, J.
Ellis, J.	Russell, Sir C.
Ellis, T. E.	Samuelson, G. B.
Fenwick, C.	Sheehan, J. D.
Finucane, J.	Spencer, hon. C. R.
Firth, J. F. B.	Stack, J.
Flower, C.	Stewart, H.
Flynn, J. C.	Sullivan, D.
Foley, P. J.	Sutherland, A.
Fox, Dr. J. F.	Swinburne, Sir J.
Fry, T.	Tanner, C. K.
Fuller, G. P.	Thomas, D. A.
Gilhooly, J.	Trevelyan, right hon.
Gill, T. P.	Sir G. O.
Gourley, E. T.	Tuite, J.
Grey, Sir E.	Warmington, C. M.
Haldane, R. B.	Wayman, T.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir	Will, J. S.
W. G. V. V.	Williamson, S.
Harris, M.	Wilson, H. J.
Mayne, C. Seale-	Winterbotham, A. B.
Healy, M.	Woodhead, J.
Healy, T. M.	Wright, C.
Hingley, B.	
Hunter, W. A.	TELLERS.
Joicey, J.	Biggar, J. G.
Kennedy, E. J.	Carew, J. L.
Kenny, C. S.	

Main Question, "That the Bill be read the third time," put.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, I desire to say a few words in view of the decision which the House has just come to—that the Bill shall apply to Ireland—upon the general application of the measure, but more especially upon its application to Ireland, and in doing so I shall endeavour to keep myself strictly within the Order of the Rules of the House and to refrain from discussing even incidentally any matter which would be more properly discussed upon the Amendment which the House has just decided upon adversely to our views and to our wishes. But perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to say generally that I greatly regret that I did not have an opportunity of speaking upon that Amendment. I was a Member of the Grand Committee which, in 1884, sat upon a measure of a similar character to this. It is a question that I have always taken a great deal of interest in, and there are several special reasons on account of which I think I might have been afforded an opportunity of speaking my views upon the immediate question which was then under discussion of the application of this measure to Ireland. However, Sir, that is a matter which has been decided upon by the House. It is past and gone, and I will only say regarding it, that I trust that when the Bill gets into Committee the Government may see fit to re-consider their decision, which may, perhaps, have been rather hastily arrived at to-night without full consideration of all the various aspects of the question, and that they may be led, as the result of the re-consideration, to treat the Bill as a purely English measure, and as one in which we consequently need not take that interest which we are so unfortunately compelled to take in many measures which are brought forward by the Government, and proposed to be extended to Ireland. I had hoped and was most desirous that the pledge the Government gave at the commencement of this Session, that this was to be a British Session, should be kept, and I think it is most unfortunate that, except in a case of absolute and urgent necessity, such as the measure brought forward yesterday, and which, if it were agreed to, we should not have trespassed on the Government for any facilities whatever in getting through its Committee stage. I have been most anxious that this Session should be a Session of

British legislation, and had the Government carried out the pledge to which I have referred, we should have been able to show we can stand by and exhibit the height of fair play to the two English Parties when discussing questions of legislation only affecting their own country. But the decision which the House has come to puts us in this position—The measure, which we should otherwise have been only too glad to see passed through the House without our opposition, we shall be compelled to oppose on every stage, simply from the point of view of Ireland. I regret this, as I have said, very much. As regards the general question, and entirely apart from the merits of the measure itself, there are special features in reference to the application of this Bill to Ireland—namely, that it will, in our opinion, injuriously affect our country—which would make it absolutely necessary for us to oppose the measure as a whole. I do not disapprove of it, and, therefore, I regret that necessity. It may be, and undoubtedly is, a very good and salutary measure for Great Britain, and we should have been most happy to have seen it passed through its different stages with the general consent of all sections and all Parties in this House; but you put us in this position, by compelling us to take an interest in it from an Irish point of view; you put us in the position of obliging us to subordinate your interest to our interest with regard to it, and, naturally, as Irishmen, we must feel a greater interest in the measure, because it is an Irish measure, than we should feel in it if it were English. I think I have said enough to show that we have some ground of complaint; first of all, because I was shut up from expressing my opinion fully upon the proper stage of the measure, and, secondly, on account of what I think has been undoubtedly the most precipitate conduct of the Government in the matter. I trust that without my saying anything more upon the subject at the present moment—because I shall have another opportunity of saying what I have to say with regard to the subject on the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill—that the Government will see the reasonableness of the position which we have taken up, and that they will feel that it is desirable and will allow us to treat

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the measure as a purely British measure.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (*Newcastle-upon-Tyne*): I think, from the point of view of progress of the Bill, that it is to be regretted that, owing to the course which the Government have thought fit to take in this matter, we have not been allowed to hear the views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork upon the issue before us; and that, consequently, there is danger that the progress of a measure, upon the principles of which we are all agreed, may be considerably impeded. I think that it will be a very deplorable circumstance if we do not have an opportunity of hearing the views of so leading a politician as the hon. Member for the City of Cork on the question. I must say that I am also afraid that the discussion of the Bill in Committee will be much impeded by the fact that the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (*Mr. T. M. Healy*) was not able, owing to the Forms of the House, to alter his Amendment in conformity with the views I ventured to lay before the House. I think that the course which the Government have taken will by no means expedite the progress of the Bill. I regret and deplore that fact, as I think that the measure is one that should be passed with all possible expedition. I repeat that by the course which the Government have taken, they have done that which will most certainly delay the passing of the measure.

MR. DILLON: I rise only for the purpose of entreating the Government to put the Committee stage of the measure off until a reasonable period after the Easter holidays.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can only say that I regret equally with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. John Morley*), that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (*Mr. Parnell*) did not avail himself of the ample opportunity he had of expressing to the House his views with regard to this measure. ["Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member did not, to my knowledge, appear in his place until a very late period of the debate, which has now gone on for five hours. I am satisfied that, had it been necessary, any hon. Member on this side of the House would have willingly yielded to the hon. Member had he shown a desire to address the House during those five

hours. In response to the appeal of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), I may say that the Government are perfectly willing to give ample time for the consideration of the measure before taking the Committee stage. They, therefore, do not propose to take that stage until Tuesday fortnight, April 12, at a Morning Sitting.

Mr. DILLON: That does not meet our views at all, and I cannot consent to the Committee stage of the Bill being taken so soon.

The House divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 92: Majority 139.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon 12th April, resolve itself into the said Committee."—(Mr. W. H. Smith.)

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to again set down the Committee stage for the 3rd May. The Government had, in spite of the earnest appeals and protests of Irish Members, made of that Bill an Irish question; and he felt bound to say, and believed many Members would agree with him, that seeing the Bill had been made one of vital interest for Ireland, some consideration should be shown, for the convenience of Irish Members. They were dragged some 400 or 500 miles from home and detained half the year in Parliament, and when permitted to return for a short Recess on Tuesday next the Government deliberately proposed that after a brief interval Irish Members should be dragged back again to London by the necessity of being in their places to attend to this Bill which, in spite of all that might be said to the contrary, was a question in which the Irish people took a vital interest. Of necessity, then, Irish Representatives must attend the discussion; and so the Government compelled them to return from Ireland not allowing a reasonable Recess. So far as he could remember, at least for a very long time, it had been an uniform practice to consult, in some measure, the convenience of Irish Members in regard to the arrangement of Irish Business, whether Bills or Estimates, or whatever Business it might be in which they were interested. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman was asked to meet the views of

Irish Members in this particular, he met the appeal by deliberately setting down the Bill for the first day of the re-assembling of Parliament after the Easter Recess.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that was not so; Thursday the 12th, was three weeks hence.

Mr. DILLON said, he was under the impression that Thursday fortnight was mentioned. However, be that as it might—[*Laughter*—] it was not such an absurd proposal as he supposed it to be, but at the same time let hon. Members remember that the proposal was to hurry Irish Members back to London and the proposal was made in the most gratuitously offensive way, the convenience of those Members being in no way consulted. It was really and truly very great evidence of want of consideration and want of courtesy on the part of the Government towards Members who sincerely desired to let the Bill pass, and have been prepared to do so. If the Government had met Irish Members in a reasonable spirit, the second reading might have been passed hours ago, and the Committee appointed for any day desired. But they must needs make of it an Irish question, in spite of all protest, and it had become a burning Irish Question to which Irish Members must attend, for their constituents required that duty of them. He thought it a reasonable proposal to fix the date as May 3rd, and made that Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "12th April," and insert, "3rd May,"—(Mr. Dillon.)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '12th April' stand part of the Question."

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, there was one point in respect to April 12th which had considerable interest for the House generally. For that day the second reading of the Local Government Bill had been set down. Were they to understand that the Government intended to postpone the Local Government Bill? [Mr. W. H. SMITH: No.] Then was the House to understand that this very important Bill was to come on at a quarter to 12, or some such hour? What was the real meaning of this Government?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long in the House, but he had been a Mem-

ber long enough to be very well aware that the Government or any Member in fixing a day for the further consideration of a Bill, fixed a day before which that Bill could not be taken. The day named for this Bill (April 12) would be just one week after the re-assembling of the House. Parliament assembled on the 5th, and he thought he would be fairly meeting the views of hon. Members from Ireland who were usually in their places within four or five days of Business being resumed. It was utterly impossible for any Government to insure that among the first Business no measure should be proceeded with that had not more or less interest for Irish Members. It was the intention of the Government to proceed with the Local Government Bill on the 12th, and in all probability the Standing Committee on Law Bills would by then be set up, and it was within the power of the Government to refer this Bill to that Law Committee; but the Government must reserve to themselves the right, if they thought fit, to refer this Bill to the Law Committee on or after the 12th.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he could not be exposed to the same reproach as his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for he had the misfortune to enter the House of Commons at the same time as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman would have made his views a little more clear if, when he was asked about the Bill, he had stated that he did not mean it to come on on the 12th of April. But the understanding now was that the Bill should not come on on that day. ["No!"] Then let the understanding be made clear. The right hon. Gentleman seemed not only to have misled Members on that side, but even some who sat behind him. Was the Bill to come on on the 12th of April? Was it to come on on the same day with the Local Government Bill? Surely the hon. Gentleman who said "No" must have been in the House a very short time indeed. But he thought they all understood the Bill would not be taken on the 12th of April, but that it might come on after then. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, the Bill was to be referred to the Law Committee, which was not yet set up; therefore, he thought his hon. Friend need not trouble

himself by the fear that the Bill was likely to come on on the 12th of April, or for a good many days after that.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long Leader of the House, but he had been long enough in the position to have the opportunity of showing some consideration and courtesy towards an important minority in the House. But from the period of his appointment to his elevated position to the present hour that section of the House had experienced from him nothing but discourtesy. They had never received from him at any time during his tenure of Office that consideration that had usually been extended to that minority by every other Leader of the House, Conservative or Liberal. It had always been usual to show some consideration to Members coming from distant parts of the Kingdom from constituencies separated by hundreds of miles from London. Members who had, or most of them had, quite enough to attend to in their own country if they were only allowed to attend to it. They could have pardoned the right hon. Gentleman for his action when he said it was his "painful" duty to move the Closure; but there was no duty incumbent upon him to fix for the next stage of this Bill a day that must be inconvenient to the opponents of the measure. To-night the right hon. Gentleman had had a good lesson on the method of managing the Business of the House. From the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, who was not by any means an enemy of the Government, he had received disinterested advice to treat Irish Members with some consideration. For the first time the House was made aware of the intention of the Government to refer this Bill to a Grand Committee, which, in his opinion, would add still further to the unpleasantness connected with the proceedings on the Bill. If that was the intention, then the composition of the Grand Committee became an important question for Irish Members. They were entitled to know who were the Members of the Committee, and must be present when the composition was discussed. Was it reasonable to bring Irish Members over from Ireland on the 12th, on what was practically a wild goose chase, and when there was no probability of the Bill being discussed? Usually, Irish

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Members were thought to take a malignant interest in the Business of the House; but now they asked to be excused from attending for some time, and when they wished to take a respite, they were to be needlessly brought over either to discuss the Bill or the composition of the Committee to which it was to be relegated. The Government might have saved the whole evening from 6 o'clock if they had struck Ireland out of the Bill, and a quarter of an hour ago might have saved this further debate, if they had allowed a reasonable interval for the next stage, having regard to the position of Members who represented distant portions of Her Majesty's Dominions. Was it likely that their loyalty towards the British Parliament would be increased by being met in such a spirit as this? If they were obliged to attend at Westminster some consideration should be shown them. Therefore, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who seemed about to rise, would signify his sense of the ease with which the Conversion scheme was allowed to pass—in which certainly Irish Members might have taken considerable interest—by showing some consideration to Irish Members, and reciprocating the courtesy shown him, and allow a longer interval before proceeding with the Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had risen not for the purpose the hon. and learned Member suggested, but to enter his most emphatic protest which would, he believed, be endorsed by all hon. Members on that side, and many Members on the other side, against the charge of discourtesy made against his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). He did not think such a charge, coming from such a quarter, ought to be passed over in silence. Frequently assailed by vituperation and personal observations, of which he felt sure the great majority of Members opposite would be ashamed, his right hon. Friend had invariably observed the most courteous bearing towards all sections of the House. In his duty of arranging the Business of the House his right hon. Friend had conscientiously endeavoured to meet the wishes of all sections and to exercise moderation in dealing with a libel upon his country which he treated any

The hon. and le

Longford spoke of the manner in which the Conversion scheme was received—of the consideration shown to that measure. He (Mr. Goschen) was grateful to hon. Members of all sections for that consideration; he acknowledged it fully, he had acknowledged it that afternoon, and he was glad to do so again. With regard to this particular question, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) seemed to ignore the constant custom of Governments and of private Members to put down Bills for a certain day, to be considered on that day, if circumstances were favourable, but more frequently they were set down so that when the day came they might be more definitely fixed for consideration. It was with that view, and certainly not to cause inconvenience to any Member, that it was proposed to set down Committee on this Bill for April 12th. It was obviously almost impossible that the Bill could be discussed on that day, but it was possible that a proposal might be made on that day to refer it to the Grand Committee on Law. The Government must reserve, in regard to this, the same right they had in regard to other Bills; but he repeated it was highly improbable and almost impossible to take the discussion on April 12th.

Mr. PARNELL said, surely the sensible course, seeing that it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could be taken on the 12th, was to accede to the very reasonable request of his hon. Friend, and not compel Irish Members to take a long journey—some of them of 600 miles—on the bare possibility of the Bill being taken. The return journey of some of his Colleagues covered 1,200 miles. He would not enter into a discussion of the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman, except to say that on a recent occasion, when he exhibited not his courtesy, but his back to Irish Members in moving the Closure, they were not able to distinguish that feature in the view presented. To his (Mr. Parnell's) knowledge, the right hon. Gentleman had not shown any courtesy or consideration to Irish Members during the Session—not to speak of other Sessions—which, he submitted, might have been expected under the circumstances. The greatest possible courtesy to have been shown by the hon. Gentleman towards Irish Members had, on every

possible occasion, when the interests of their country allowed them to do so, effaced themselves in order to expedite Government Business. The return for that made by the right hon. Gentleman was to move the Closure whenever an Irish Member rose to speak. He would not say that was want of courtesy, since the phrase was objected to; but he would say it displayed a want of consideration and an absence of that judicious character that best became a Leader of the House, and the presence of which ensured that rapid transaction of Business the Tory Party professed to desire. Of all Leaders of the House he had known, the right hon. Gentleman was most like that publican who was his own best customer—he was the champion Obstructionist of his own business. The House had for the last hour been discussing a matter which never ought to have been discussed, if the right hon. Gentleman had possessed a particle of tact. He had originated by his conduct first one discussion, then another, on points entirely unnecessary; and so far had he been from saving time, that he had now lost the chance of bringing forward another Government measure, to which it was presumed he attached some value, and which he might have proceeded with had he shown some consideration for the views of Irish Members. It was to be hoped that at the eleventh hour the House might be spared a prolongation of this discussion, and as it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could come on on the 12th April, the Government would accede to the Motion of his hon. Friend, and put it down for some day when it would be highly probable and most possible that it would be brought on.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 198; Noes 130: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Committee upon *Thursday* 12th April.

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES

BILL. [*Lords*].—[BILL 174.]

(*Mr. Attorney General*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General*.)

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Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had no desire to object to the Bill, but he would ask that it might be referred to the Grand Committee on Law. It was called a consolidation Bill, and no doubt it was intended to be so. But it was not; it was a translation of an old law into a new law. The Bill also re-enacted some objectionable provisions, and in Committee it would be proposed to introduce Amendments with respect to those provisions; but he would not pursue his remarks at any length, if it was understood the Bill would be referred to the Law Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, if the right hon. Gentleman would take time and carefully look through the Bill, he would find that, with some variation in language, every section was taken from the old Acts. Still, if it was the desire of the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill should go before the Grand Committee, he would not oppose it.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 12th April.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the House would allow this Bill to be read a second time. It did not inflict any charge upon the taxpayers, but was intended to make provision out of ecclesiastical funds alone, as occasion required, for the restoration and repair of the Abbey. The dilapidations of the Abbey were serious and considerable, and he trusted the House would agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*.)

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea) said, he hoped that the Bill would not be taken at such a time (12 o'clock). He did not know that he objected to it altogether, but there were certain provisions in it that required certain explanation—what

amount they were called upon to vote—

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, there was no amount to vote at all.

Mr. DILLWYN said, at all events, he did not think the Bill should be passed hurriedly, and he moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*,)—put and *agreed to*.

Debate adjourned till *To-morrow*.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (ARREARS OF RENT)

BILL.—[BILL 147.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair.*)

SECOND READING.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, after the statements made by the First Lord of the Treasury to-night in connection with the debate of the previous day, he did not feel himself justified as a private Member in keeping his Bill any longer on the Paper. But in moving that the Order for the second reading be discharged, he wished to be allowed to say that he would not allow that any responsibility rested upon himself and his friends; the responsibility must rest on the shoulders of the responsible Government of the country. He moved that the Order be discharged.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the order for the Second Reading of the Bill be read and discharged."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*.)

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Order *discharged*.

Bill *withdrawn*.

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in lieu of the duties of Customs now charged on rum and on British and Irish spirits imported into the Isle of Man, there shall be charged the duties following (that is to say):—

	s.	d.
Rum, including shrub, of the British Possessions, the gallon	8	6
British and Irish spirits, not otherwise exempted from the payment of duty, the gallon	8	6

—(*Mr. Jackson*.)

Objection taken; and, it being Mid-night, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Preston Bruce, Bill to organize and promote Secondary Education in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Eeslemont.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 187.]

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law as to Reports of Proceedings in Courts of Law, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 188.]

ROADS AND BRIDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1878, AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill to amend "The Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Sir Archibald Campbell.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 189.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — High Sheriff, *nominated*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—House of Lords (Constitution) Reform * (51); Women's Suffrage * (52); Tithe Rent-Charge * (53); Tithe Rent-charge Recovery and Variation * (54).

Second Reading—Land Charges Registration and Searches * (40).

Second Reading—Committee *negatived*—*Considered*—*Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt Conversion (49), and *passed*.

Third Reading—Lunacy Acts Amendment * (48), and *passed*.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION)

BILL.—(No. 49.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2."—(*The Viscount Cranbrook.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that in the drafting of the Bill the funds of the Duchy of Lancaster had been placed within his disposal as Lord Chancellor. It was too late to alter this now; but as soon as possible the fund would be restored to the name of the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) the Chancellor of the Duchy.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^d accordingly; Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. considered (according to order), and dispensed with: Bill read 3^d, and passed.

IRISH FISHERIES.—RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF HOWTH, in rising to move to resolve—

“That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty’s Government,”

said, that last year a Royal Commission had been appointed to take into consideration the condition of certain industries in Ireland, prominently among them the fishing interests. That Commission had issued a Report and made certain recommendations. Lord Montague had given Notice, at the termination of the Easter Recess, to criticize that Report. If the noble Lord had confined himself to that, for his own part, he would not have ventured to interfere; but the noble Lord also intended to inquire of Her Majesty’s Government how far they proposed to act upon the recommendations inserted in the Report of that Commission. He felt that if he were to delay any observations which he might have to make upon this matter until after the Easter Recess, Her Majesty’s Government would have quite made up their minds upon the course they intended to pursue. His first object was to impress upon the Government the earnest necessity of inspection, with regard to the fishing grounds on the Irish coast, before any legislation took place on the subject of those fisheries. His second object was expressed in the terms of the Resolution on the Paper. In 1865 a Royal Commission had been appointed for the purpose of taking into consideration the fisheries of the United Kingdom, and had earnestly supported the inspection

of these grounds. Year after year the Irish Fishery Inspectors had been urging that they should have vessels placed at their disposal for the purpose of thorough and scientific investigation. This matter might be regarded from two points of view—Imperial and local. Those who were engaged solely in the fishing industry in Ireland were in a very bad way; and but for a prospect of increased stir in the industry, it would be better for them to take to some other pursuit in life. The question was also a very important one in connection with the great food supply of the nation. The Irish were not fish eaters themselves, and it was really the English consumer who was chiefly interested in this question. Owing to the rates charged by the railways, the transport of fish from East to West was very small. On the Midland in 1887 only 1,200 tons of fish were transported across Ireland from the West to the East Coast, and the only chance of stimulating the demand for fish caught off the Irish Coasts lay in providing cheap and easy access to the English markets. Wick, in Scotland, was 700 miles from London, and the fare for a ton of fish from Wick to London was £3 1s.; Cork, in the South of Ireland, was 550 miles, and the fare for a ton of fish from there to London was £5 1s. He, therefore, thought it clear that the Irish fish could not be profitably brought to the English markets unless its transit was facilitated by subsidies. The noble Earl, in conclusion, moved the Resolution which stood in his name.

Moved to resolve—

“That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty’s Government.”—(The Earl of Howth.)

LORD DENMAN said, that although railway and canal rates might be regulated, yet the passage by sea would have to be attended to in order to render the carriage of fish to England cheap. He had great confidence in his Friend Sir James Allport, but thought he had possibly erred in making first-class tickets too cheap. It cost him before railways were established £30 to go from and to London and back from Derbyshire; but now an expense of only £5 6s. for three persons was charged—

two first-class £4, one third-class £1 6s. He ventured to think that if, without loss to Railway Companies, more could be charged for all passengers and less for heavy goods and articles of food, it might benefit Ireland.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, no one could feel surprised that the noble Earl, whose experience in regard to Irish fisheries was so great, should bring forward this question. He would not, however, attempt to follow the noble Earl through the various points on which he had touched, but would content himself with saying that it was impossible for him to accept the somewhat sweeping Resolution which had just been moved. He rather hoped that the noble Earl would content himself with the valuable remarks which he had made—remarks which would receive the attentive consideration of Her Majesty's Government—and would not press their Lordships to divide. He was glad, however, that the noble Earl had afforded him an opportunity of stating to the House the position of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Reports of the Royal Commission to which the noble Earl had alluded. The noble Earl was aware that the Royal Commission had made two separate Reports. The reference to the Commission was in the following order—first, they were asked to inquire into the subject of fisheries and harbours; secondly, into the subject of arterial drainage; and, thirdly, into the subject of railway communication. But the Commission thought it right to apply themselves to the subject of arterial drainage in the first place, and having reported upon it, the Government thought it their duty to deal as soon as possible with that subject. A Bill on the question was now in an advanced stage of preparation; the Government hoped to lay it on the Table in a short time, and that it would receive the sanction of Parliament during this Session. Though they had received the Report of the Commission on the fisheries, they had not received either the evidence or copies of the important documents on which the Report was based. As soon as they had received the evidence and the documents, they would proceed with the task they had undertaken with reference to the fisheries, harbours, and railways also. More

than that he could not say on the present occasion. The subjects which had been referred to the Royal Commission were, in the opinion of the Government, of the most vital importance to Ireland. They might not, perhaps, be as exciting or sensational as other questions relating to Ireland which had occupied the attention of Parliament; but they were subjects which must be treated with the utmost care and consideration. The Government would not defer laying their proposals before Parliament any longer than they could help, and he trusted they would receive the support of noble Lords on the other side of the House.

LORD DENMAN explained that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had shown him that he was wrong in thinking that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill did not apply to Ireland, and he was ashamed not to have studied the 4th clause of the Bill more carefully; and, as it had passed their Lordships' House, he regretted that he had said anything in doubt of its efficiency.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MINTO asked Her Majesty's Government in respect of their forthcoming Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, Whether the Bill will apply in whole or in part to the Tweed and its tributaries, which are at present subject to the provisions of special and private Acts of Parliament; also, whether it is their intention to introduce the Bill and have it printed and circulated before the Easter Recess? The noble Earl said, it was most desirable that, as far as possible, all Bills affecting Scotland should be produced before Easter. The County Meetings were held on the 30th of April, and opportunity for the consideration of such measures ought to be given them.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, Her Majesty's Government did intend to bring in a Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, and that that Bill would include the Tweed and its tributaries, except those tributaries which were in England. As to whether the Bill would be printed and circulated before the

. Recess, he thought the noble Earl would see that that was not possible now. This was not a simple subject, and it would be by no means easy to draw up a Bill that would be satisfactory to all the parties concerned.

TWEED FISHERIES ACTS.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE EARL OF MINTO, in moving for Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line; also the number of acquittals and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction; also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary; the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—Section 1st to comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge; 2nd, from Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge; 3rd, from Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge; 4th, all waters above Melrose Bridge; also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—1st, from Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge; 2nd, from Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge; 3rd, all the waters above Hornshole Bridge. The noble Earl said these Returns would be useful in showing not only the whole number of offences and offenders against the Tweed Acts, but in showing with some particularity the parts of the country and the streams which furnish the largest proportion of illegal fishers. It was often argued that if the public were allowed free liberty of rod fishing, the public would become the most effective protectors of the rivers against illegal fishing. He himself would greatly like to believe that this was the case, though he greatly doubted it. Anyhow these Returns would throw some light upon that point. He rather anticipated that the Returns would

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prove these two things—first, that the number of offenders against the Tweed Laws was in inverse proportion to the value of the respective rights of fishing in different streams; second, that the number of offenders was proportionately largest in respect of those streams which were practically open to the public already, and where the riparian proprietors abstained from exercising their proprietary rights.

Moved, for “Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line :

Also the number of acquittals, and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction :

Also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary :

The Returns to be prepared in sections as follows :

Section 1st. To comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge.

2nd. From Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge.

3rd. From Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge.

4th. All waters above Melrose Bridge :

Also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows :

1st. From Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge.

2nd. From Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge.

3rd. All the waters above Hornshole Bridge.”—(*The Earl of Minto*.)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, the Government were prepared to give the Returns asked for, but he was afraid that they would take some time to prepare and cost considerable expense. He would like to call the attention of his noble Friend to the fact that he had altered the terms of his Motion three times. When Motions of this kind were altered and added to from time to time, it was extremely difficult to obtain that information which was necessary before assenting to the Motion. He agreed with what the noble Earl had said, that poaching was not so great on the main streams as on the tributaries. This fact was known, he thought, to everyone, and therefore he could not understand why the noble Earl required a Return with regard to that. He had, however,

no doubt the Returns when prepared would be interesting and useful. He did not know whether the noble Earl wanted the Returns for the purpose of making any changes in the Salmon Fisheries Bill when introduced. If he did he was afraid it would delay the Bill considerably, and he did not wish to do that.

Motion agreed to.

Returns ordered to be laid before the House.

SALE OF IMPORTED MEAT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they will not introduce some measure to prevent the fraudulent practice of selling foreign imported meat as home produce, a practice which inflicts serious injury on the agricultural interest and on all producers and consumers in the United Kingdom? said, he had received so many communications on this subject from all parts of the country that he was convinced that it was regarded as one of very great importance to the agricultural interest. The noble Marquess at the head of the Government had recently stated that there was no chance of any reversion to Protection. He was very glad that the noble Marquess had made that distinct announcement; but if there was no chance of Protection, it was all the more incumbent on the Government to see that justice, at any rate, was done to the agricultural interest. The Prime Minister had the other day expressed the desire of Her Majesty's Government to do all they could to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural interest; and one step in that direction was taken by this House when, a few days ago, it carried the Amendment of the noble Earl (the Earl of Jersey) upon the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and struck a blow against the preference given in railway rates to foreign produce. When, some years ago, foreign meat was first imported from Canada and the United States the meat was openly sold as such, the public were informed of what they were buying; and got it at extremely cheap prices—at 4½d. or 5d. a-pound, and frequently it was sold at shops specially opened for the sale of such imported meat. But now the foreign

meat was sold with home meat, and no distinction was made between the two. Instead of the poorer classes getting the imported meat at 4d. or 5d. or 6d. a-pound they paid 8d. or 9d., the money taken from the price of the home meat being added on to the price of the foreign meat. Unfortunately, there was nothing in the law to prevent this. He was informed that a quantity of horse flesh was also sold in this way. A remedy for this state of things which he suggested was very simple, and could be effected by the insertion of two clauses into the Adulteration Act of 1875. One clause should provide that every person selling foreign meat should take out a licence; and the second clause should impose severe penalties on any person who sold foreign meat without having over his shop a board stating that the shopkeeper was licensed to sell foreign meat. This would have the effect of putting purchasers on their guard against having foreign meat palmed off upon them as home meat, and at the high prices of home meat. It would be the greatest boon not only to agriculturists, but to consumers throughout the Kingdom. It might be said that this was a side-wind of Protection. It was Protection, but protection of the poorer classes rather than of the agriculturists in the first place. It was a strange fact that if the question was put to a butcher whether or not he sold foreign meat he always said he did not, yet immense quantities of foreign meat were being annually imported. Last year the amount of foreign meat brought into London was double what it was in the preceding year. What became of this foreign meat if it was not sold by the butchers? Were the Government willing to allow this practice of deception to continue? Parliament had shown itself alive to the importance of matters of this kind by passing the Adulteration Act, the Margarine Act, and the Merchandise Marks Act. It interfered to prevent the sale of margarine under the name of butter, although margarine was as good as butter. But no one could deny that foreign meat after the miles it had to travel by land and sea was, when it reached this country, inferior in quality to home meat. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not hesitate to step in and interfere to stop the deception now practised, and if they did

British legislation, and had the Government carried out the pledge to which I have referred, we should have been able to show we can stand by and exhibit the height of fair play to the two English Parties when discussing questions of legislation only affecting their own country. But the decision which the House has come to puts us in this position—The measure, which we should otherwise have been only too glad to see passed through the House without our opposition, we shall be compelled to oppose on every stage, simply from the point of view of Ireland. I regret this, as I have said, very much. As regards the general question, and entirely apart from the merits of the measure itself, there are special features in reference to the application of this Bill to Ireland—namely, that it will, in our opinion, injuriously affect our country—which would make it absolutely necessary for us to oppose the measure as a whole. I do not disapprove of it, and, therefore, I regret that necessity. It may be, and undoubtedly is, a very good and salutary measure for Great Britain, and we should have been most happy to have seen it passed through its different stages with the general consent of all sections and all Parties in this House; but you put us in this position, by compelling us to take an interest in it from an Irish point of view; you put us in the position of obliging us to subordinate your interest to our interest with regard to it, and, naturally, as Irishmen, we must feel a greater interest in the measure, because it is an Irish measure, than we should feel in it if it were English. I think I have said enough to show that we have some ground of complaint; first of all, because I was shut up from expressing my opinion fully upon the proper stage of the measure, and, secondly, on account of what I think has been undoubtedly the most precipitate conduct of the Government in the matter. I trust that without my saying anything more upon the subject at the present moment—because I shall have another opportunity of saying what I have to say with regard to the subject on the Motion for going into Committee upon the Bill—that the Government will see the reasonableness of the position which we have taken up, and that they will feel that it is desirable and will allow us to treat

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the measure as a purely British measure.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (*Newcastle-upon-Tyne*): I think, from the point of view of progress of the Bill, that it is to be regretted that, owing to the course which the Government have thought fit to take in this matter, we have not been allowed to hear the views of the hon. Member for the City of Cork upon the issue before us; and that, consequently, there is danger that the progress of a measure, upon the principles of which we are all agreed, may be considerably impeded. I think that it will be a very deplorable circumstance if we do not have an opportunity of hearing the views of so leading a politician as the hon. Member for the City of Cork on the question. I must say that I am also afraid that the discussion of the Bill in Committee will be much impeded by the fact that the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (*Mr. T. M. Healy*) was not able, owing to the Forms of the House, to alter his Amendment in conformity with the views I ventured to lay before the House. I think that the course which the Government have taken will by no means expedite the progress of the Bill. I regret and deplore that fact, as I think that the measure is one that should be passed with all possible expedition. I repeat that by the course which the Government have taken, they have done that which will most certainly delay the passing of the measure.

MR. DILLON: I rise only for the purpose of entreating the Government to put the Committee stage of the measure off until a reasonable period after the Easter holidays.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can only say that I regret equally with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (*Mr. John Morley*), that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (*Mr. Parnell*) did not avail himself of the ample opportunity he had of expressing to the House his views with regard to this measure. ["Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member did not, to my knowledge, appear in his place until a very late period of the debate, which has now gone on for five hours. I am satisfied that, had it been necessary, any hon. Member on this side of the House would have willingly yielded to the hon. Member had he shown a desire to address the House during those five

hours. In response to the appeal of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), I may say that the Government are perfectly willing to give ample time for the consideration of the measure before taking the Committee stage. They, therefore, do not propose to take that stage until Tuesday fortnight, April 12, at a Morning Sitting.

MR. DILLON: That does not meet our views at all, and I cannot consent to the Committee stage of the Bill being taken so soon.

The House divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 52: Majority 139.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon 12th April, resolve itself into the said Committee."—(Mr. W. H. Smith.)

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to again set down the Committee stage for the 3rd May. The Government had, in spite of the earnest appeals and protests of Irish Members, made of that Bill an Irish question; and he felt bound to say, and believed many Members would agree with him, that seeing the Bill had been made one of vital interest for Ireland, some consideration should be shown, for the convenience of Irish Members. They were dragged some 400 or 500 miles from home and detained half the year in Parliament, and when permitted to return for a short Recess on Tuesday next the Government deliberately proposed that after a brief interval Irish Members should be dragged back again to London by the necessity of being in their places to attend to this Bill which, in spite of all that might be said to the contrary, was a question in which the Irish people took a vital interest. Of necessity, then, Irish Representatives must attend the discussion; and so the Government compelled them to return from Ireland not allowing a reasonable Recess. So far as he could remember, at least for a very long time, it had been an uniform practice to consult, in some measure, the convenience of Irish Members in regard to the arrangement of Irish Business, whether Bills or Estimates, or whatever Business it might be in which they were interested. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman was asked to meet the views of

Irish Members in this particular, he met the appeal by deliberately setting down the Bill for the first day of the re-assembling of Parliament after the Easter Recess.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that was not so; Thursday the 12th, was three weeks hence.

MR. DILLON said, he was under the impression that Thursday fortnight was mentioned. However, be that as it might—[*Laughter*—]—it was not such an absurd proposal as he supposed it to be, but at the same time let hon. Members remember that the proposal was to hurry Irish Members back to London and the proposal was made in the most gratuitously offensive way, the convenience of those Members being in no way consulted. It was really and truly very great evidence of want of consideration and want of courtesy on the part of the Government towards Members who sincerely desired to let the Bill pass, and have been prepared to do so. If the Government had met Irish Members in a reasonable spirit, the second reading might have been passed hours ago, and the Committee appointed for any day desired. But they must needs make of it an Irish question, in spite of all protest, and it had become a burning Irish Question to which Irish Members must attend, for their constituents required that duty of them. He thought it a reasonable proposal to fix the date as May 3rd, and made that Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "12th April," and insert, "3rd May,"—(Mr. Dillon.)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That '12th April' stand part of the Question."

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, there was one point in respect to April 12th which had considerable interest for the House generally. For that day the second reading of the Local Government Bill had been set down. Were they to understand that the Government intended to postpone the Local Government Bill? [Mr. W. H. SMITH: No.] Then was the House to understand that this very important Bill was to come on at a quarter to 12, or some such hour? What was the real meaning of this Government?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long in the House, but he had been a Mem-

ber long enough to be very well aware that the Government or any Member in fixing a day for the further consideration of a Bill, fixed a day before which that Bill could not be taken. The day named for this Bill (April 12) would be just one week after the re-assembling of the House. Parliament assembled on the 5th, and he thought he would be fairly meeting the views of hon. Members from Ireland who were usually in their places within four or five days of Business being resumed. It was utterly impossible for any Government to insure that among the first Business no measure should be proceeded with that had not more or less interest for Irish Members. It was the intention of the Government to proceed with the Local Government Bill on the 12th, and in all probability the Standing Committee on Law Bills would by then be set up, and it was within the power of the Government to refer this Bill to that Law Committee; but the Government must reserve to themselves the right, if they thought fit, to refer this Bill to the Law Committee on or after the 12th.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby) said, he could not be exposed to the same reproach as his right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for he had the misfortune to enter the House of Commons at the same time as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman would have made his views a little more clear if, when he was asked about the Bill, he had stated that he did not mean it to come on on the 12th of April. But the understanding now was that the Bill should not come on on that day. ["No!"] Then let the understanding be made clear. The right hon. Gentleman seemed not only to have misled Members on that side, but even some who sat behind him. Was the Bill to come on on the 12th of April? Was it to come on on the same day with the Local Government Bill? Surely the hon. Gentleman who said "No" must have been in the House a very short time indeed. But he thought they all understood the Bill would not be taken on the 12th of April, but that it might come on after then. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, the Bill was to be referred to the Law Committee, which was not yet set up; therefore, he thought his hon. Friend need not trouble

himself by the fear that the Bill was likely to come on on the 12th of April, or for a good many days after that.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not been very long Leader of the House, but he had been long enough in the position to have the opportunity of showing some consideration and courtesy towards an important minority in the House. But from the period of his appointment to his elevated position to the present hour that section of the House had experienced from him nothing but discourtesy. They had never received from him at any time during his tenure of Office that consideration that had usually been extended to that minority by every other Leader of the House, Conservative or Liberal. It had always been usual to show some consideration to Members coming from distant parts of the Kingdom from constituencies separated by hundreds of miles from London. Members who had, or most of them had, quite enough to attend to in their own country if they were only allowed to attend to it. They could have pardoned the right hon. Gentleman for his action when he said it was his "painful" duty to move the Closure; but there was no duty incumbent upon him to fix for the next stage of this Bill a day that must be inconvenient to the opponents of the measure. To-night the right hon. Gentleman had had a good lesson on the method of managing the Business of the House. From the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, who was not by any means an enemy of the Government, he had received disinterested advice to treat Irish Members with some consideration. For the first time the House was made aware of the intention of the Government to refer this Bill to a Grand Committee, which, in his opinion, would add still further to the unpleasantness connected with the proceedings on the Bill. If that was the intention, then the composition of the Grand Committee became an important question for Irish Members. They were entitled to know who were the Members of the Committee, and must be present when the composition was discussed. Was it reasonable to bring Irish Members over from Ireland on the 12th, on what was practically a wild goose chase, and when there was no probability of the Bill being discussed. Usually, Irish

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Members were thought to take a malignant interest in the Business of the House; but now they asked to be excused from attending for some time, and when they wished to take a respite, they were to be needlessly brought over either to discuss the Bill or the composition of the Committee to which it was to be relegated. The Government might have saved the whole evening from 6 o'clock if they had struck Ireland out of the Bill, and a quarter of an hour ago might have saved this further debate, if they had allowed a reasonable interval for the next stage, having regard to the position of Members who represented distant portions of Her Majesty's Dominions. Was it likely that their loyalty towards the British Parliament would be increased by being met in such a spirit as this? If they were obliged to attend at Westminster some consideration should be shown them. Therefore, he hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who seemed about to rise, would signify his sense of the ease with which the Conversion scheme was allowed to pass—in which certainly Irish Members might have taken considerable interest—by showing some consideration to Irish Members, and reciprocating the courtesy shown him, and allow a longer interval before proceeding with the Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he had risen not for the purpose the hon. and learned Member suggested, but to enter his most emphatic protest which would, he believed, be endorsed by all hon. Members on that side, and many Members on the other side, against the charge of discourtesy made against his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith). He did not think such a charge, coming from such a quarter, ought to be passed over in silence. Frequently assailed by vituperation and personal observations, of which he felt sure the great majority of Members opposite would be ashamed, his right hon. Friend had invariably observed the most courteous bearing towards all sections of the House. In his duty of arranging the Business of the House his right hon. Friend had conscientiously endeavoured to meet the wishes of all sections and to preserve moderation in debate, and it was really a libel upon his right hon. Friend to say he treated any Member with discourtesy. The hon. and learned Member for North

Longford spoke of the manner in which the Conversion scheme was received—of the consideration shown to that measure. He (Mr. Goschen) was grateful to hon. Members of all sections for that consideration; he acknowledged it fully, he had acknowledged it that afternoon, and he was glad to do so again. With regard to this particular question, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) seemed to ignore the constant custom of Governments and of private Members to put down Bills for a certain day, to be considered on that day, if circumstances were favourable, but more frequently they were set down so that when the day came they might be more definitely fixed for consideration. It was with that view, and certainly not to cause inconvenience to any Member, that it was proposed to set down Committee on this Bill for April 12th. It was obviously almost impossible that the Bill could be discussed on that day, but it was possible that a proposal might be made on that day to refer it to the Grand Committee on Law. The Government must reserve, in regard to this, the same right they had in regard to other Bills; but he repeated it was highly improbable and almost impossible to take the discussion on April 12th.

MR. PARNELL said, surely the sensible course, seeing that it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could be taken on the 12th, was to accede to the very reasonable request of his hon. Friend, and not compel Irish Members to take a long journey—some of them of 600 miles—on the bare possibility of the Bill being taken. The return journey of some of his Colleagues covered 1,200 miles. He would not enter into a discussion of the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman, except to say that on a recent occasion, when he exhibited not his courtesy, but his back to Irish Members in moving the Closure, they were not able to distinguish that feature in the view presented. To his (Mr. Parnell's) knowledge, the right hon. Gentleman had not shown any courtesy or consideration to Irish Members during the Session—not to speak of other Sessions—which, he submitted, might have been expected under the circumstances. The greatest possible consideration ought to have been shown by the right hon. Gentleman towards Irish Members, who had, on every

possible occasion, when the interests of their country allowed them to do so, effaced themselves in order to expedite Government Business. The return for that made by the right hon. Gentleman was to move the Closure whenever an Irish Member rose to speak. He would not say that was want of courtesy, since the phrase was objected to; but he would say it displayed a want of consideration and an absence of that judicious character that best became a Leader of the House, and the presence of which ensured that rapid transaction of Business the Tory Party professed to desire. Of all Leaders of the House he had known, the right hon. Gentleman was most like that publican who was his own best customer—he was the champion Obstructionist of his own business. The House had for the last hour been discussing a matter which never ought to have been discussed, if the right hon. Gentleman had possessed a particle of tact. He had originated by his conduct first one discussion, then another, on points entirely unnecessary; and so far had he been from saving time, that he had now lost the chance of bringing forward another Government measure, to which it was presumed he attached some value, and which he might have proceeded with had he shown some consideration for the views of Irish Members. It was to be hoped that at the eleventh hour the House might be spared a prolongation of this discussion, and as it was highly improbable, and almost impossible, that the Bill could come on on the 12th April, the Government would accede to the Motion of his hon. Friend, and put it down for some day when it would be highly probable and most possible that it would be brought on.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 198; Noes 130: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Committee upon *Thursday* 12th April.

MORTMAIN AND CHARITABLE USES

BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 174.]

(*Mr. Attorney General*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General*.)

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Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had no desire to object to the Bill, but he would ask that it might be referred to the Grand Committee on Law. It was called a consolidation Bill, and no doubt it was intended to be so. But it was not; it was a translation of an old law into a new law. The Bill also re-enacted some objectionable provisions, and in Committee it would be proposed to introduce Amendments with respect to those provisions; but he would not pursue his remarks at any length, if it was understood the Bill would be referred to the Law Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, if the right hon. Gentleman would take time and carefully look through the Bill, he would find that, with some variation in language, every section was taken from the old Acts. Still, if it was the desire of the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill should go before the Grand Committee, he would not oppose it.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 12th April.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]
(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the House would allow this Bill to be read a second time. It did not inflict any charge upon the taxpayers, but was intended to make provision out of ecclesiastical funds alone, as occasion required, for the restoration and repair of the Abbey. The dilapidations of the Abbey were serious and considerable, and he trusted the House would agree to the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*.)

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea) said, he hoped that the Bill would not be taken at such a time (12 o'clock). He did not know that he objected to it altogether, but there were certain provisions in it that required certain explanation—what

amount they were called upon to vote—

MR. W. H. SMITH said, there was no amount to vote at all.

MR. DILLWYN said, at all events, he did not think the Bill should be passed hurriedly, and he moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*,)—put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till *To-morrow*.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (ARREARS OF RENT)

BILL.—[Bill 147.]

(*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Sinclair.*)

SECOND READING.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, after the statements made by the First Lord of the Treasury to-night in connection with the debate of the previous day, he did not feel himself justified as a private Member in keeping his Bill any longer on the Paper. But in moving that the Order for the second reading be discharged, he wished to be allowed to say that he would not allow that any responsibility rested upon himself and his friends; the responsibility must rest on the shoulders of the responsible Government of the country. He moved that the Order be discharged.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the order for the Second Reading of the Bill be read and discharged."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell*.)

Question put, and agreed to.

Order discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in lieu of the duties of Customs now charged on rum and on British and Irish spirits imported into the Isle of Man, there shall be charged the duties following (that is to say):—

	s.	d.
Rum, including shrub, of the British Possessions, the gallon	8	6
British and Irish spirits, not otherwise exempted from the payment of duty, the gallon	8	6

—(*Mr. Jackson*.)

Objection taken; and, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress; Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Preston Bruce, Bill to organize and promote Secondary Education in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Haldane, and Mr. Esslemont.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 187.]

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law as to Reports of Proceedings in Courts of Law, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 188.]

ROADS AND BRIDGES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1878, AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. B. Balfour, Bill to amend "The Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878," ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Sir Archibald Campbell.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 189.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — High Sheriff, *nominated*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—House of Lords (Constitution) Reform * (51); Women's Suffrage * (52); Tithe Rent-Charge * (53); Tithe Rent-charge Recovery and Variation * (54).

Second Reading—Land Charges Registration and Searches * (40).

Second Reading—Committee *negatived*—*Considered*—*Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; National Debt Conversion (49), and *passed*.

Third Reading—Lunacy Acts Amendment * (48), and *passed*.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION)

BILL.—(No. 49.)

(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."—(*The Viscount Cranbrook*.)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that in the drafting of the Bill the funds of the Duchy of Lancaster had been placed within his disposal as Lord Chancellor. It was too late to alter this now; but as soon as possible the fund would be restored to the name of the noble Duke (the Duke of Rutland) the Chancellor of the Duchy.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly; Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. considered (according to order), and dispensed with: Bill read 3^a, and passed.

IRISH FISHERIES.—RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF HOWTH, in rising to move to resolve—

“That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty’s Government,”

said, that last year a Royal Commission had been appointed to take into consideration the condition of certain industries in Ireland, prominently among them the fishing interests. That Commission had issued a Report and made certain recommendations. Lord Montague had given Notice, at the termination of the Easter Recess, to criticize that Report. If the noble Lord had confined himself to that, for his own part, he would not have ventured to interfere; but the noble Lord also intended to inquire of Her Majesty’s Government how far they proposed to act upon the recommendations inserted in the Report of that Commission. He felt that if he were to delay any observations which he might have to make upon this matter until after the Easter Recess, Her Majesty’s Government would have quite made up their minds upon the course they intended to pursue. His first object was to impress upon the Government the earnest necessity of inspection, with regard to the fishing grounds on the Irish coast, before any legislation took place on the subject of those fisheries. His second object was expressed in the terms of the Resolution on the Paper. In 1865 a Royal Commission had been appointed for the purpose of taking into consideration the fisheries of the United Kingdom, and had earnestly supported the inspection

of these grounds. Year after year the Irish Fishery Inspectors had been urging that they should have vessels placed at their disposal for the purpose of thorough and scientific investigation. This matter might be regarded from two points of view—Imperial and local. Those who were engaged solely in the fishing industry in Ireland were in a very bad way; and but for a prospect of increased stir in the industry, it would be better for them to take to some other pursuit in life. The question was also a very important one in connection with the great food supply of the nation. The Irish were not fish eaters themselves, and it was really the English consumer who was chiefly interested in this question. Owing to the rates charged by the railways, the transport of fish from East to West was very small. On the Midland in 1887 only 1,200 tons of fish were transported across Ireland from the West to the East Coast, and the only chance of stimulating the demand for fish caught off the Irish Coasts lay in providing cheap and easy access to the English markets. Wick, in Scotland, was 700 miles from London, and the fare for a ton of fish from Wick to London was £3 1s.; Cork, in the South of Ireland, was 550 miles, and the fare for a ton of fish from there to London was £5 1s. He, therefore, thought it clear that the Irish fish could not be profitably brought to the English markets unless its transit was facilitated by subsidies. The noble Earl, in conclusion, moved the Resolution which stood in his name.

Moved to resolve—

“That legislation on the Irish fisheries will not be attended with beneficial results until a reduction on the rates of carriage of fish from the Irish coasts to the English markets is assured by Her Majesty’s Government.”—(The Earl of Howth.)

LORD DENMAN said, that although railway and canal rates might be regulated, yet the passage by sea would have to be attended to in order to render the carriage of fish to England cheap. He had great confidence in his Friend Sir James Allport, but thought he had possibly erred in making first-class tickets too cheap. It cost him before railways were established £30 to go from and to London and back from Derbyshire; but now an expense of only £5 6s. for three persons was charged—

two first-class £4, one third-class £1 6s. He ventured to think that if, without loss to Railway Companies, more could be charged for all passengers and less for heavy goods and articles of food, it might benefit Ireland.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN) said, no one could feel surprised that the noble Earl, whose experience in regard to Irish fisheries was so great, should bring forward this question. He would not, however, attempt to follow the noble Earl through the various points on which he had touched, but would content himself with saying that it was impossible for him to accept the somewhat sweeping Resolution which had just been moved. He rather hoped that the noble Earl would content himself with the valuable remarks which he had made—remarks which would receive the attentive consideration of Her Majesty's Government—and would not press their Lordships to divide. He was glad, however, that the noble Earl had afforded him an opportunity of stating to the House the position of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Reports of the Royal Commission to which the noble Earl had alluded. The noble Earl was aware that the Royal Commission had made two separate Reports. The reference to the Commission was in the following order—first, they were asked to inquire into the subject of fisheries and harbours; secondly, into the subject of arterial drainage; and, thirdly, into the subject of railway communication. But the Commission thought it right to apply themselves to the subject of arterial drainage in the first place, and having reported upon it, the Government thought it their duty to deal as soon as possible with that subject. A Bill on the question was now in an advanced stage of preparation; the Government hoped to lay it on the Table in a short time, and that it would receive the sanction of Parliament during this Session. Though they had received the Report of the Commission on the fisheries, they had not received either the evidence or copies of the important documents on which the Report was based. As soon as they had received the evidence and the documents, they would proceed with the task they had undertaken with reference to the fisheries, harbours, and railways also. More

than that he could not say on the present occasion. The subjects which had been referred to the Royal Commission were, in the opinion of the Government, of the most vital importance to Ireland. They might not, perhaps, be as exciting or sensational as other questions relating to Ireland which had occupied the attention of Parliament; but they were subjects which must be treated with the utmost care and consideration. The Government would not defer laying their proposals before Parliament any longer than they could help, and he trusted they would receive the support of noble Lords on the other side of the House.

LORD DENMAN explained that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had shown him that he was wrong in thinking that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill did not apply to Ireland, and he was ashamed not to have studied the 4th clause of the Bill more carefully; and, as it had passed their Lordships' House, he regretted that he had said anything in doubt of its efficiency.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MINTO asked Her Majesty's Government in respect of their forthcoming Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, Whether the Bill will apply in whole or in part to the Tweed and its tributaries, which are at present subject to the provisions of special and private Acts of Parliament; also, whether it is their intention to introduce the Bill and have it printed and circulated before the Easter Recess? The noble Earl said, it was most desirable that, as far as possible, all Bills affecting Scotland should be produced before Easter. The County Meetings were held on the 30th of April, and opportunity for the consideration of such measures ought to be given them.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, Her Majesty's Government did intend to bring in a Salmon Fisheries Bill for Scotland, and that that Bill would include the Tweed and its tributaries, except those tributaries which were in England. As to whether the Bill would be printed and circulated before the

. Recess, he thought the noble Earl would see that that was not possible now. This was not a simple subject, and it would be by no means easy to draw up a Bill that would be satisfactory to all the parties concerned.

TWEED FISHERIES ACTS.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE EARL OF MINTO, in moving for Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line; also the number of acquittals and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction; also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary; the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—Section 1st to comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge; 2nd, from Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge; 3rd, from Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge; 4th, all waters above Melrose Bridge; also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows:—1st, from Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge; 2nd, from Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge; 3rd, all the waters above Hornshole Bridge. The noble Earl said these Returns would be useful in showing not only the whole number of offences and offenders against the Tweed Acts, but in showing with some particularity the parts of the country and the streams which furnish the largest proportion of illegal fishers. It was often argued that if the public were allowed free liberty of rod fishing, the public would become the most effective protectors of the rivers against illegal fishing. He himself would greatly like to believe that this was the case, though he greatly doubted it. Anyhow these Returns would throw some light upon that point. He rather anticipated that the Returns would

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prove these two things—first, that the number of offenders against the Tweed Laws was in inverse proportion to the value of the respective rights of fishing in different streams; second, that the number of offenders was proportionately largest in respect of those streams which were practically open to the public already, and where the riparian proprietors abstained from exercising their proprietary rights.

Moved, for “Returns for each of the years 1886 and 1887 of the number of cases that have been the subject of trial for alleged offences under the Tweed Fisheries Acts, distinguishing those that occurred during the open season for rod and line fishing from those that occurred during the close season for rod and line :

Also the number of acquittals, and the number of convictions, and the punishment awarded in each case of conviction :

Also distinguishing the cases (so far as the nature of the charges admits) that have occurred in respect of alleged offences on the main stream of the Tweed from those that have occurred on each of its tributaries, and giving the name of each such tributary :

The Returns to be prepared in sections as follows :

Section 1st. To comprise the Tweed and its tributaries from its mouth up to Coldstream Bridge.

2nd. From Coldstream Bridge to Kelso Bridge.

3rd. From Kelso Bridge to Melrose Bridge.

4th. All waters above Melrose Bridge :

Also, as regards the Teviot (the chief tributary of the Tweed), the Returns to be prepared in sections as follows :

1st. From Teviot Foot to Ancrum Bridge.

2nd. From Ancrum Bridge to Hornshole Bridge.

3rd. All the waters above Hornshole Bridge.”—(*The Earl of Minto.*)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of Lothian) said, the Government were prepared to give the Returns asked for, but he was afraid that they would take some time to prepare and cost considerable expense. He would like to call the attention of his noble Friend to the fact that he had altered the terms of his Motion three times. When Motions of this kind were altered and added to from time to time, it was extremely difficult to obtain that information which was necessary before assenting to the Motion. He agreed with what the noble Earl had said, that poaching was not so great on the main streams as on the tributaries. This fact was known, he thought, to everyone, and therefore he could not understand why the noble Earl required a Return with regard to that. He had, however,

no doubt the Returns when prepared would be interesting and useful. He did not know whether the noble Earl wanted the Returns for the purpose of making any changes in the Salmon Fisheries Bill when introduced. If he did he was afraid it would delay the Bill considerably, and he did not wish to do that.

Motion agreed to.

Returns ordered to be laid before the House.

SALE OF IMPORTED MEAT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether they will not introduce some measure to prevent the fraudulent practice of selling foreign imported meat as home produce, a practice which inflicts serious injury on the agricultural interest and on all producers and consumers in the United Kingdom? said, he had received so many communications on this subject from all parts of the country that he was convinced that it was regarded as one of very great importance to the agricultural interest. The noble Marquess at the head of the Government had recently stated that there was no chance of any reversion to Protection. He was very glad that the noble Marquess had made that distinct announcement; but if there was no chance of Protection, it was all the more incumbent on the Government to see that justice, at any rate, was done to the agricultural interest. The Prime Minister had the other day expressed the desire of Her Majesty's Government to do all they could to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural interest; and one step in that direction was taken by this House when, a few days ago, it carried the Amendment of the noble Earl (the Earl of Jersey) upon the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and struck a blow against the preference given in railway rates to foreign produce. When, some years ago, foreign meat was first imported from Canada and the United States the meat was openly sold as such, the public were informed of what they were buying; and got it at extremely cheap prices—at 4½d. or 5d. a-pound, and frequently it was sold at shops specially opened for the sale of such imported meat. But now the foreign

meat was sold with home meat, and no distinction was made between the two. Instead of the poorer classes getting the imported meat at 4d. or 5d. or 6d. a-pound they paid 8d. or 9d., the money taken from the price of the home meat being added on to the price of the foreign meat. Unfortunately, there was nothing in the law to prevent this. He was informed that a quantity of horse flesh was also sold in this way. A remedy for this state of things which he suggested was very simple, and could be effected by the insertion of two clauses into the Adulteration Act of 1875. One clause should provide that every person selling foreign meat should take out a licence; and the second clause should impose severe penalties on any person who sold foreign meat without having over his shop a board stating that the shopkeeper was licensed to sell foreign meat. This would have the effect of putting purchasers on their guard against having foreign meat palmed off upon them as home meat, and at the high prices of home meat. It would be the greatest boon not only to agriculturists, but to consumers throughout the Kingdom. It might be said that this was a side-wind of Protection. It was Protection, but protection of the poorer classes rather than of the agriculturists in the first place. It was a strange fact that if the question was put to a butcher whether or not he sold foreign meat he always said he did not, yet immense quantities of foreign meat were being annually imported. Last year the amount of foreign meat brought into London was double what it was in the preceding year. What became of this foreign meat if it was not sold by the butchers? Were the Government willing to allow this practice of deception to continue? Parliament had shown itself alive to the importance of matters of this kind by passing the Adulteration Act, the Margarine Act, and the Merchandise Marks Act. It interfered to prevent the sale of margarine under the name of butter, although margarine was as good as butter. But no one could deny that foreign meat after the miles it had to travel by land and sea was, when it reached this country, inferior in quality to home meat. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not hesitate to step in and interfere to stop the deception now practised, and if they did

so they would confer a boon on both agriculturists and the poorer classes.

LORD TRURO said, the noble Lord probably did not anticipate a satisfactory reply to his Question, for the point he had raised was part of a much larger subject. Trade frauds should be dealt with more severely. There was no country in Europe in which trade frauds were so prevalent as in England, and they would never be stopped until some personal disgrace was inflicted upon the men who habitually defrauded the public in the way that was now frequently done. In France the law was much more severe, and the Penal Code provided that persons found guilty of trade frauds might be punished not merely with penalties but by imprisonment, extending from 15 days to three months. The consequence was that these offences were much fewer in France than here. He should like the Government to lay a Return on the Table of the convictions obtained in this country merely for the adulteration of milk. The penalties that had been inflicted were much too small to deter offenders. In France a man could be fined and sent to prison for 15 days, and the Court could order the publication of placards announcing the sentence imposed.

LORD WANTAGE said, he thought that the proposal of the noble Lord would cause great inconvenience. The most respectable butchers bought and sold good foreign meat with advantage to themselves and to their customers. If they were compelled to take out a licence and proclaim themselves buyers of foreign meat they would, he feared, be prejudiced. Foreign meat was sometimes better than English meat, and farmers themselves often sold it. What would really do good would be to encourage farmers to take advantage in greater numbers of the retail trade. Four or five farmers by associating together could carry on the trade of butcher with much profit to themselves. He was afraid the proposal of the noble Lord would be prejudicial to the traders, and in no way beneficial to the buyer.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, he was surprised that the noble Lord who had introduced this subject should have appeared to complain of an absence of sympathy in the Government for the agricultural interest, he should have

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thought that the reference to agriculture in the Speech from the Throne and the observations which had recently fallen from the noble Marquess at the head of the Government ought to have impressed everybody with the fact that there was no ground for any such complaint. The interest taken by the Government in subjects affecting agriculture had been shown by the passing of the Margarine Act, the introduction of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and the proposal made in "another place" for the relief of local taxation. With reference to the particular question brought forward by the noble Lord, he should like to ask him whether those who complained of not getting English meat when they wanted it, really asked the butchers to give them English and not foreign meat. His advice to buyers was, in the words of the advertisements, "When you ask for it see that you get it." The noble Lord wished the Government to introduce a measure for preventing the fraudulent practice of selling foreign meat as home produce, but if the practice was a fraudulent one he presumed it could be reached by the law as it stood. The Merchandise Marks Act laid down that any one who applied any false trade description to any goods should be held guilty of an offence. Then the 6th section of the Act of 1875 relating to the sale of food and drugs, enacted that "no person shall sell an article of food which is not of the nature and quality asked for." There were also Acts of Parliament under which people could be punished for obtaining money under false pretences. Until the noble Lord and those whom he represented had tried whether the object which they had in view could not be attained by the operation of some of those laws the Government could hardly be asked to introduce fresh legislation. The Return asked for by the noble Lord opposite he would be happy to consider; but he did not himself think that it would be desirable to impose heavy penalties and imprisonment for offences such as the noble Lord had referred to. There were cases in which the infringement of an Act might almost be thought laudable; for instance, when a man mixed a little water with the gin which he sold.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, the 6th section of the Sale of Food

Drugs Act could not serve the purpose of the noble Lord (Lord Lamington), because it was clearly directed solely against adulteration.

LORD LAMINGTON asked whether it was to be understood that the sale of foreign as English meat was punishable under Clause 6 of the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act?

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that he wished carefully to avoid expressing any legal opinion upon this subject. All that he would say was that, until the noble Lord's friends should have tried unavailingly prosecution under the existing law, there could be no good ground for asking the Government to initiate legislation.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(The Lord Chancellor.)

(NO. 48.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^d."
—(The Lord Chancellor.)

EARL SPENCER said, he believed it was now perceived that the Bill did not meet a case which he adduced when the Bill was in Committee. He was not now prepared with a clause, but he trusted that if it were found practicable to frame a clause, the object he had in view would be attained when the Bill was in Committee in the other House.

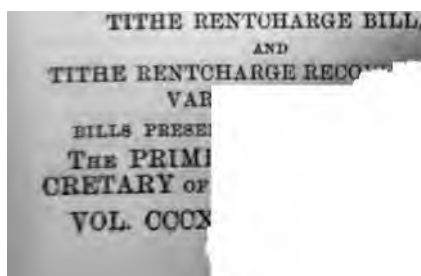
THE LORD CHANOEELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, there was some doubt in the matter; but he was inclined to think that the noble Earl was right, and if it turned out to be so he should have no objection to the necessary amendment of the Bill.

LORD BALFOUR said, the communications that had taken place had reduced the matter at issue to a small point, which should be fully considered before the Bill reached the stage of Committee in the other House.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 3^d accordingly; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY), in rising to call attention to the mode of levying tithes, and to present a Bill, said: I wish to bring before your Lordships a Bill with reference to the incidence of tithes and the lamentable occurrences which are taking place, especially in the Western part of the country. It was not possible last Session to pass the measure which passed through your Lordships' House, because it did not commend itself to the judgment of the House of Commons. A good deal of discussion took place upon tithes, and we were able to see where the difficulty with respect to them lay, and we are now able to introduce a measure to modify the difficulty. I must first call your attention to what the difficulty is. Tithe is a very peculiar property. It is not a burden on the land; it is not a burden on the landowner; it is a burden on the produce of the land. But the produce of the land is in the hands of the occupier; while by law the person responsible with respect to the tithe is not the occupier but the owner. The result of that state of things is this—that in order to get at the produce of the land you must levy distraint upon the occupier. Yet the occupier, who is not the debtor, has to suffer the inconvenience of distraint for a debt that is not his own. And the difficulty arising from that state of things has been a good deal envenomed by its being mixed up with social and theological discussions, into which I need not further enter. The first consideration which occurs to us, on reviewing the discussion which took place both last year and before, is that the difficulty has arisen because the Act of 1836 has not been exactly obeyed, or rather that the landlords, in their contracts with the tenants, have been able to contract themselves out of the operation of the Act of 1836. By the 80th clause of that Act the tenant is indeed liable for the payment of tithe; but having paid the tithe, whatever it is, he is at liberty, just as in the case of the Income Tax, to deduct the payment that he has made from the rent he owes to the landlord when he pays the rent to the landlord.

Since between the case of the Income Tax and the case of the Income Tax guarded that used upon the tenant contract between the



landlord and the tenant; and the Tithe Act overlooked that precaution. If the precaution had been taken this difficulty would not have existed now. If that precaution is taken now the difficulty will only exist as regards the existing contracts; it will not exist as regards contracts which come into existence after the passing of this Bill. It appears to me, therefore, that if there is a question as to what it is best to pass, we have to economize our time; the first thing we ought to do is to pass an Act remedying that defect in the Act of 1836, avoiding contracts between landlords and tenants which throw the burden on the tenants instead of leaving it, as the Act does, upon the landlord—in fact, putting tithes on a level with the Income Tax in that respect. If we do that the evil will be remedied as to future contracts, and all existing contracts will in due time die out. I propose, therefore, to split up the Bill of last year into three separate Bills. The first Bill I submit to your Lordships is one for simply putting tithe on a level with the Income Tax in respect to that precaution, and avoiding for the future contracts which prevent the tenant from recovering tithe he has actually paid by enabling him to deduct it from the rent due to the landlord; That will only operate in the future. What are we to do with contracts that exist now? The evil is too great, the injury done to the relations, especially between the spiritual titheowner and the landowner and occupier, are too serious to allow us to wait till the slow operation of the change of which I have spoken shall make these conflicts for the future impossible. Last year our proposal was simply to transfer the liability from the occupier to the owner, to put an end to the remedy of distraint, and, with certain elaborate precautions, to enable the titheowner to recover his tithe from the owner of the land. I believe that is a perfectly sound and innocent remedy. But I am bound to say that, though the Bill passed this House with great ease, the landowners, of whom we have not a few here, accepted it apparently with goodwill; but when it came to “another place” of more jealous and exacting scrutiny there was a very considerable number of landowners who were not at all prepared to submit to this new responsi-

bility being placed upon them. There is no doubt it laid a considerable responsibility upon them, because it made the whole property of the landowner liable to tithes, which it is not now. We should have contended that the new liability was so surrounded by precautions that no practical harm could result to the landowner. However, we are very anxious if we can—I do not know whether it is possible—to find a mode of effecting the change which shall neither injure nor frighten the landowner, and, therefore, we propose to take another course this year. We shall leave the case of the owner who occupies his own land just where it is; the grievance does not arise with him, only that there is a remedy which is already in the Act of 1836 which we shall slightly develop and apply to cases of land occupied by the landowner and other lands—I mean the remedy that is given by the Act of 1836 in cases where there is not sufficient to distrain upon on the land. The Act of 1836 provides that where there is not enough produce on the land to pay the tithe, the titheowner may step into the place of the landowner and become *ad hoc* the landowner, receiving the rent until the tithe shall be paid, and the costs incurred shall be paid, when the land shall revert to its proper owner. We propose to re-enact that remedy in a more modern form by enabling the County Court to appoint a receiver of rents where the tithe is not paid. The receiver will be appointed at the suit of the titheowner when the tithe is a certain period in arrear, and that receiver will have the right of either farming the land, if it is in the occupation of the owner, or of receiving the rent, if it is in the occupation of another person. As soon as the tithe is discharged and the costs paid the receiver will hand the land back to its true owner. I think that remedy, though effective, will possibly be costly; and we propose another remedy in the cases where the occupier is not the owner of the land. Distraint in that case, which is the present remedy, will be forbidden; and in place of it the County Court will, on the petition of the titheowner, issue an injunction to the farmer warning him to pay the tithe out of the first money that comes into his hands as the produce of his farm. If, after the receipt of that notification, the farmer

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shall pay any rent to his landlord before he has paid the tithe to the titheowner he will have accepted the tithe as his own personal debt; in other words, we attach the rent. I do not know whether that will be held to be a more satisfactory remedy than the one we proposed last year. At all events, it is theoretically a much sounder remedy, for it limits liability absolutely to the produce of the land and imposes no liability on the landowner himself. The produce of the land will be liable, as it is now, in the first instance, to tithe before any rent is paid, and when that tithe has been paid the rent will be paid as before. It will be obvious, of course, that this remedy will be of no use in those cases, of which I am afraid we have some instances in the country at the present time, where the produce of the land after all expenses are paid is not enough to pay either the tithe or the rent. In these cases, of course, it is of no use to attach the rent; to attach the rent when there is no rent is an illusory remedy; there is no possible remedy except the remedy of a receiver in that case. Although the titheowner has a right to get whatever the land yields, I believe in reality in those cases that, practically, the right no longer exists; and where the land has failed to yield produce the titheowner, as well as the landowner, is practically dispossessed of his property. That, putting it simply, is the nature of the remedy which we offer in this Bill for the purpose of getting rid of the grievance of distraint. It is bad to leave the law as it is even if it would work; but the friction and animosity produced are so great that we are bound to find some other means of conveying to the titheowner that share which is his due in the produce of the land. One thing more. Great complaint has been often made of the operation of the seven years' average. It is said, and said justly, that where a depression and consequent fall in the prices of agricultural produce set in, the first years of the seven years' period continue by their high prices to bear down the farmer long after his farm has ceased to yield the high results on which those first averages were based. We believe it would be more just to take a three years' average, and that that would be sufficient. The Bill of last year had yet

another part which I do not propose to introduce to-night, although I should be glad if it were possible to come to some arrangement with the Episcopal Bench in regard to it—I mean that part of the Bill which concerns the redemption of tithes. I had the honour to introduce into the Bill of last year clauses which would have facilitated the redemption of tithes, I believe, in a practical manner; but the terms, which were favourable enough to induce the landowner to redeem, were thought too favourable to the landowner, and those who represent the Church pressed for some modification of those terms. Whether we shall be able to effect such a modification I do not know, but I must express a strong conviction that if redemption is thought by those who represent the Church to be a desirable object, it will not be brought about without a sufficient concession to the landowners to induce them to undertake it. However, that is a matter hardly relevant to my present purpose. I propose now to present the Bills which I have described to the House, and after the Recess I will ask your Lordships to read them a second time.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he did not propose at the present stage to discuss measures which were not in terms before the House; but still he should like to say a few words on the observations of the noble Marquess. He was glad the noble Marquess had recognized that a change in the mode of recovering tithe should be made; but it was a matter which might cause landlords a loss. With regard to the first Bill, he was inclined to say that the provision that the landlord should not be able to contract himself out of the obligation to refund the tithe to the tenant was a fair and just provision. In a great number of instances it was the practice for landowners to permit the tenant to deduct from the rent the tithe which he had paid, and he believed in those cases no difficulty had been experienced. In that respect the Bill would establish throughout the country a practice found to work smoothly in places where it was in operation. With regard, however, to the provision for the recovery of the tithe from tenants holding under existing contracts, he confessed to some doubt—he hoped it might prove otherwise—lest

the proposed remedy should turn out to be too complicated, and after all should not remove the difficulty with regard to the tenant. That was to say, they would still have to go to the tenant, and the tenant would, no doubt, in many cases continue to act unreasonably. He was afraid that any system by which it was necessary to make application to the tenant would be apt to produce friction. On the question of redemption he entirely agreed with the noble Marquess that unless the Church was prepared to make some concession it was practically impossible to effect the object. It was not that it was desired to take away from the Church her due share in the produce of the land; but the present was a case in which, in the interests of the Church herself, he believed redemption would be desirable. There was another subject which the noble Marquess had not touched upon—that was the re-assessment of some portion of titheable lands. It could not be contended that they should persevere in a system with regard to certain lands where the tithe actually swallowed up the whole profit of the land and operated as a confiscation of the whole income of the land. This was no light matter. Surely it was not a mere question of pounds, shillings, and pence, because the result would be that land would go out of cultivation. Great injury would be inflicted in districts where the land ceased to be cultivated. In making these observations, he wished to be understood as reserving his opinion till he saw the Bills; but he felt sure that the desire of his Colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench was to co-operate, as far as possible, with the noble Marquess in the object he had in view.

EARL STANHOPE said, that he was glad the Bills had been brought forward, and hoped that they would be pushed through Parliament as rapidly as possible. The resistance to the payment of tithes in Wales had assumed an acute stage. He was glad, too, that the seven years' averages would be reduced to three years. It would be much more equitable to all parties.

LORD HARLECH said, he agreed that there was a great call for legislation on this question; but, considering the opportunities for obstruction in "another place," he was not sure that the noble Marquess was pursuing a judicious

course in dealing with the subject in three Bills. He suggested that it would be more convenient to make one Bill of it divided into three parts, and thereby afford less opportunity for obstruction.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he was of opinion, on the contrary, that to adopt the suggestion of his noble Friend would be to run the risk of destroying the whole of this legislation. The advantage gained by having three Bills was that if two went to the bottom the third might float. The Government hoped, however, to be able to pass all three Bills.

Bill to amend section eighty of the Tithe Rentcharge Act, 1836.—*Presented* (The Marquess of SALISBURY.)

Bill read 1st. (No. 53.)

Bill to amend the law with respect to the recovery and variation of tithe rentcharge in England.—*Presented* (The Marquess of SALISBURY.)

Bill read 1st. (No. 54.)

LAND CHARGES REGISTRATION AND SEARCHES BILL.—(No. 40.)

(*The Lord Hobhouse.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD HOBHOUSE, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was intended to remove some of the dangers which beset purchasers in the shape of charges upon the purchased land. By the Statute of 1837 judgments had to be registered in the Common Pleas Office; but that had necessitated a number of expensive searches, and in 1860 an Act had been passed to give further security to purchasers, requiring not only the registration of judgments but also that of writs of execution, and that such writs should be enforced within three months. In 1861 another Act was passed to give further protection; but, unfortunately, instead of giving further protection to the purchaser, it took away that which he already had. This miscarriage of the Legislature was found out in the recent case of *Re Pope*, and it created great alarm among purchasers of land and their legal advisers. It necessitated expensive searches, which were simply prohibitory in the case of small purchases. He proposed to require again

The Earl of Kimberley

that no judgment or order should have effect until registered. Another point related to Receivers in Bankruptcy. He was told that, owing to the want of a central office, searches for Receiving orders were enormously expensive and long, and in small purchases were quite prohibited by the cost. He proposed that all charges must be registered in the central registry. A third point dealt with in this Bill was that of the numerous class of Acts passed in late years enabling charges to be made upon the land for drainage and improvements of various kinds. The present system required a large number of different searches, in spite of some consolidation having been effected. They should all be registered in the central office. He thought that everybody must agree with the objects of this Bill. What he now proposed was to ask their Lordships to read it a second time, and then that it should be referred to the same Committee which would sit upon the Land Transfer Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Hobhouse*.)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL. QUESTION.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: I have given the noble Marquess private Notice of a Question upon two points connected with the Conversion Bill upon which it is desired that a public authoritative statement should be made. The two points are these—in the first place, is it to be understood, as provided in the Bill, that trustees are to treat the 5s. bonus as income to be paid to the life tenant, or will it be merely optional for them to do so? A distinct provision in the former sense would greatly simplify matters and relieve trustees. Secondly, where a solicitor has to be employed but does not happen to be the "agent" recognized by the Bank as the party entitled to receive the 1s. 6d. commission, is there anything in the Bill to preclude him from making his usual professional charges?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (*The Marquess of Salisbury*): Having received private Notice of the Question, I referred it to my right hon.

Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has enabled me to answer it. The Bill authorizes trustees to treat the 5s. bonus as interest; but it was not possible to compel them to do so. Strictly the bonus should have been regarded as capital; but in view of the great inconvenience of compelling trustees to reinvest, especially in the case of the smaller holdings, it was thought right to give them the option of treating the bonus as income, and relieve them from responsibility if they so treated it. With regard to the second Question, solicitors, bankers, and brokers will be recognized as agents by the Bank. There is nothing in the Bill to prevent any man receiving his usual professional remuneration. But the commission of 1s. 6d. was allowed in order to save holders from the necessity of sacrificing a part of their bonus in order to pay such professional remuneration, which the commission itself was provided to supply.

SWEATING SYSTEM.

The evidence taken before the Select Committee from time to time to be *printed* for the use of the Members of this House; but no copies thereof to be delivered, except to Members of the Committee, until further order. (No. 50.)

HOUSE OF LORDS (CONSTITUTION) REFORM BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the constitution of the House of Lords—Was *presented* by The Lord Kenry (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl*); read 1^a. (No. 51.)

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for extending the right of voting at Parliamentary elections to duly qualified women—Was *presented* by The Lord Denman; read 1^a. (No. 52.)

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

HIGH SHERIFFS.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:—

L. President	L. Clinton.
(<i>V. Cranbrook</i>).	L. Saye and Sele.
E. Stanhope.	L. Leconfield.
E. Camperdown.	L. Hothfield.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

The Lord KINTORE (*E. Kintore*) chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—STANDING COMMITTEES—Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure, *nominated*; Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacture, *nominated*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution, in Committee*—Customs, Isle of Man.*

Ordered—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works Commission* [191].

First Reading—Railway and Canal Traffic* [190].

Second Reading—Westminster Abbey [165]; Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) [92] [House counted out].

Committee—*Report*—*Third Reading*—Statute Law Revision* [186], and *passed*.

Third Reading—Army (Annual)* [179]; East India (Purchase and Construction of Railways)* [143], and *passed*.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY accordingly *reported* from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure which may by Order of the House be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Tyssen Amherst, Mr. Asquith, Sir G. Baden-Powell, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Beach, Mr. Beadel, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. George Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Jesso Collings, Mr. Cummins, Mr. Curzon, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. Dillwyn, Sir John Dorington, Colonel Duncan, Viscount Ebring-

ton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. John E. Ellis, Mr. Elton, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Claud Hamilton, Sir W. Vernon Harcourt, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Compton Lawrance, Sir Charles Lewis, Mr. Lockwood, Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald, Mr. Frederic Maclean, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Madden, Mr. Mahony, Mr. Marum, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Matthews, Mr. John Morley, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Picton, Sir John Puleston, Mr. John E. Redmond, Mr. Russell, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. J. E. Spencer, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Tomlinson, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Waddy, Sir Richard Webster, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Wodehouse, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY further *reported* from the said Committee; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufacture, which may, by order of the House, be committed to such Standing Committee: Mr. Addison, Mr. Asher, Mr. Baring, Mr. Barran, Sir Walter Bartelot, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Bolitho, Mr. J. C. Bolton, Mr. Bonsor, Mr. Boord, Mr. A. H. Brown, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Burt, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Henry Chaplin, Mr. Childers, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. Colman, Mr. W. J. Corbet, Sir James Corry, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Baron de Worms, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Sir George Elliot, Mr. T. E. Ellis, Mr. R. V. Penrose FitzGerald, Mr. Gilliat, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Grotrian, Mr. A. W. Hall, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Frank Hardcastle, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Heneage, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Howell, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. William Lowther, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Muntz, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Parnell, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. J. Robertson, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Craig Sellar, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sinclair,

Mr. Slagg, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Whitley, Mr. S. Williamson, Mr. C. H. Wilson, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Wood.

Ordered, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND) — COMMUNICATION FROM OBAN TO LOCHMADDY.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Postmaster General, Why the mail communication by steamer from Oban to Lochmaddy has been withdrawn; whether he is aware that great dissatisfaction and inconvenience has arisen in consequence to the people of North Uist; and, whether he can see his way to restore the communication, which had only been obtained a year ago after much solicitation?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): With a view to give effect to wishes frequently expressed, a mail packet was recently established between Portree and Dunvegan, calling at Lochmaddy in both directions, and affording to Lochmaddy every day of the week, Sunday excepted, a convenient means of communicating with the mainland *via* Strome Ferry. It is in these circumstances that the continuance of the mail communication by steamer from Lochmaddy *via* Oban (which had been afforded under very different circumstances) did not appear to the Government to be justified; and I regret that I can hold out no prospect of its restoration.

TRUCK ACTS (SCOTLAND)—DUNFERMLINE COAL COMPANY.

MR. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to an alleged breach of the Truck Acts by the Dunfermline Coal Company in February last; whether the complaint set forth a *prima facie* case of breach of these Acts, such as would lead to a conviction if the facts were proved; and, whether he will communicate with the Procurator Fiscal, with a view to a reconsideration of his refusal to institute proceedings in reference thereto?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention has been called to this question, and I have made some inquiry, from which it appears that the Procurator Fiscal did not consider there was a *prima facie* case made out on the information which was laid before him; and I am informed that, the case being a difficult one, he consulted the Sheriff Substitute, who agreed with this view, and thought he should not interfere. It appears to be a question of some doubt and intricacy; and I shall go into the matter more fully, and consider whether proceedings should not be instituted.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885 — LOANS.

MR. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the loan sanctioned by the Land Commissioners under "The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1885," amounted to over £3,600,000, while only about £2,000,000 has been paid to the vendors; what is the cause of the delay which has taken place in the issue of the loans; and, whether interest will be credited to the vendors from the dates at which the loans were sanctioned?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The figures are substantially as quoted in the Question. The Land Purchase Commissioners inform me that loans are provisionally sanctioned as soon as the Commissioners are satisfied as to the security; but it is, of course, impossible to pay over the purchase money until the vendors have proved their titles and executed the necessary conveyances. Every possible facility is afforded them for this purpose; but the greater or less expedition must necessarily depend on the nature of their titles, and on the energy of their solicitors in prosecuting the proceedings. The Commissioners have no power to allow interest on purchase money agreed to be advanced; but in cases where proceedings are likely to be protracted, landlords themselves of the provision of the Land Purchase Act, 1887, may, by the purchase money, pending the

tions. They may also, by their agreements for sale, provide for the payment of interest by tenants pending the completion of the sale. It is expected that over £200,000 will be issued in the present month.

VACCINATION ACT—MR. LESLIE CREERY, CLERK TO THE EAST ASHFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. Leslie Creery, who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians, advises the Board to prosecute offenders against the Vaccination Act, is the same Mr. Leslie Creery who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Magistrates, advises the Bench as to what fines and costs should be inflicted on them; if so, whether it is in conformity with the Regulations of the Local Government Board that the legal adviser to the prosecutors should also be legal adviser to the magistrates; and, whether, in his capacity as clerk to the magistrates, he receives a portion of the costs of each of the cases, such as for summonses, and copies, administering oaths, &c. which, in his capacity as Clerk to the Guardians, he has advised should be prosecuted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: Mr. Creery is both Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians and also Clerk to the Justices of the Division. The Local Government Board Regulations do not deal with the point of both these appointments being held by the same officer. I am informed by Mr. Creery that in his capacity as Clerk to the Justices he receives the costs and fees payable on all convictions; but they are at once credited to the County Authority, as he is, and has been for some time, paid by a fixed salary.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Committee of Council on Education have now before them any Schemes of the Charity Commissioners involving the alteration of Trusts of any Charities; and, if so, whether he will

state the names of the Charities and the places to which they belong; the volume and page of the Charity Commissioners Reports in which the original Trusts are given; and, the amount of property and income approximately with which it is proposed to deal?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): All Schemes of the Charity Commissioners which are before the Education Department are submitted to that Department under the provisions of the Endowed School Acts; and all those Schemes provide, in accordance with Section 9 of the Act, 1869, for the alteration of the existing Trusts of the Endowments dealt with. The information asked as to names, places, and amounts of income is from time to time, stated in the Appendix to the Annual Reports of the Commissioners. The Report for 1887 has been forwarded to the Home Office for presentation to Her Majesty, and will shortly be laid on the Table of the House. The information thus given removes all difficulty in referring in any particular case to the original Reports of the Commissioners of Charity (1818-37), which Reports are fully indexed. I will consider the possibility of giving an earlier publicity to the Scheme of the Commissioners in the localities affected.

GENERAL CATTLE DISEASES FUND—INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the total amount of the income of the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Contagious Diseases Animals Act in 1878, and what is the balance (if any) now to the credit of that Fund; what was the amount in the £1 assessed by the Local Government Board under the Contagious Diseases Animals Act, on the various Unions in Ireland, and the dates upon which said assessments were paid; and, whether, since, as directed by the recent Order in Council, steps are about being taken to stamp out pleuropneumonia in the Dublin District, by the compulsory slaughter of all cattle that have been in any way, however remotely, exposed to contagion, and as such compulsory slaughter will benefit the cattle trade not of Dublin alone, but of the entire country, it is the intention

Colonel King-Harman

of the Irish Government to take advantage of section 83, sub-section 8, of the Act of 1878, to increase the poundage rate throughout the entire of Ireland to an extent under said sub-section sufficient to meet the claims for compensation arising out of the compulsory slaughter of healthy animals?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The total amount received into the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Act in 1878 has been £92,648 6s. 2½d. The balance to the credit of the Fund on the 1st of the present month amounted to £9,168 10s. 4d. The assessments referred to have been on each occasion ½d. in the £1. The dates on which they were made are as follow:—December 24, 1879, February 3, 1881, June 19, 1882, December 13, 1883, July 22, 1885, and May 27, 1887—averaging about £14,300 each levy. Pleuro-pneumonia has been practically confined to the Dublin District for a very considerable period; and there can be no doubt that the continued and continuous existence of the disease in the Dublin dairy-yards is due mainly to their insanitary condition and the manner in which the cattle kept in them are housed and fed, and to concealment of disease from the proper authorities. Under these circumstances, it would be manifestly unfair to tax the whole of Ireland to meet cases for compensation in the Dublin District on an equal scale with the ratepayers of the affected Unions. The Government, however, recognize that the recent Order, while absolutely necessary, may press severely on the rates of the Dublin Unions if their resources are at once called upon to meet all the cases for compensation; and they are considering a scheme by which assistance may be given to the districts mainly affected by the Order in the event of its provisions being promptly obeyed and carried out.

**LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—
GRANTS IN AID.**

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for **MR. O'DOHERTY**) (Donegal, N.) asked **Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer**, What proportion the annual amount raised by county cess, borough rate, and other town rates bears to the total amount raised by local taxation in

Ireland; are any grants in aid of such county cess and town rates made from the Imperial Exchequer; and, why are the cesspayers practically excluded from such relief in aid?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (**Mr. GOSCHEN**) (St. George's, Hanover Square): According to the last Return, the total amount raised by local rates in Ireland is £2,797,451, and the county cess, borough rate, and other town rates amount to £1,760,125, or 63 per cent of the whole. The grant for the maintenance of pauper lunatics goes in aid of the county cess. It amounts to about £105,000. The counties also benefit by the cost of prosecutors and witnesses in Crown cases, which were formally provided for by presentment, being now borne by the Imperial Exchequer and by a small grant made to certain public infirmaries. But these are not, strictly speaking, grants in aid of the county cess. In the same way in towns in which the Commissioners are Urban Sanitary Authorities half the cost of the sanitary officers' salaries is borne by the Government; but it is the poor rates which are relieved by this, rather than the town rates proper. I think I may take the hon. Member's Question as indicating his wish that any further relief given to local rates in Ireland should be applied in aid of the county cess and town rates. I cannot, of course, make any promise now; but I note his wish.

**POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—PARCEL
POST—SUNDAY WORK.**

MR. TUIE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the officers of the Parcel Post in Dublin are at present obliged to work for eight hours every alternate Sunday without any extra pay, and are only paid for every hour they are on duty after the first eight hours; whether, when the Parcel Post was established in 1883, the then Postmaster General gave an undertaking that no Sunday duty would be expected from the officers engaged in that service; and, whether, having regard to the fact that in London the Parcel Post officers are paid for every hour they are on duty on Sundays, the officers in the Irish Department will be placed on the same footing?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (**MR. RAIKES**) (Cambridge Unive

reply, said, he had put himself in communication with the Department; and as soon as he had received the desired information he would answer the Question of the hon. Member.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Star* newspaper on the 21st of March, 1888, that—

“On the 31st of December, 1886, five men and one girl were brought before the Alnwick Bench of Magistrates, for having brought off the beach some pieces of timber,” and were fined—

“£3, odd, each, with the alternative of one month each in gaol for the men, and 14 days for the girl;”

whether the girl was taken to gaol on Saturday last, and those of the men who have not paid the fine are also “threatened” with imprisonment; whether the timber was washed in with the tide, and practically valueless; and, whether he can state the reason why the policeman refused the “offer of the men to go to gaol.”

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Clerk to the Alnwick Justices that five men and a girl were convicted on the 22nd of December, 1886, for having in their possession timber which had been jettisoned from a stranded vessel, and had been salvaged by the fishermen and stacked on the shore. The statutory penalty for this offence is £20, or six months' imprisonment. Four men were fined £2; one man and the girl 10s.; the alternative being a month and a fortnight's imprisonment respectively. Time for payment was given in each case. On the 10th of this month, three of the men only having paid, the Justices issued commitments against the rest. The girl paid on the 17th instant. The timber was not valueless; two of the pieces found in the possession of one of the defendants were valued at 4s. 2d., and four pieces in the possession of another defendant were valued at 6s. 10d. The Justices did not wish to send the men to prison if they could help it.

MR. FENWICK asked, whether it was not true that the men, during the

time of the trade dispute to which the right hon. Gentleman had just referred, said that they could not pay the fine, but offered to serve their term of imprisonment during the trade dispute; whether their offer to go to prison was not refused by the policeman; whether they did not offer to pay the amount of the fine by instalments; and whether that offer was also refused? He also asked the right hon. Gentleman to state why the sentence was deferred for such a length of time?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I can only answer the last part of the Question. I understand the Justices to say that the payment was deferred from time to time, and that the Justices were unwilling to send them to prison, inasmuch as the men were out on strike, and unable to earn wages. Time was given on five occasions, until ultimately three of the men paid; and the Justices thought it was unfair to those three if proceedings were not taken against the others.

MR. FENWICK said, the men told the policeman that they were unable to pay, and that they preferred to go to prison during the time of the trade dispute. Afterwards, when the men were in employment, they took them from their homes when they had offered to pay the amount of the fines by instalments.

MR. MATTHEWS: If the hon. Member will give me particulars, I will make inquiries on the subject.

MR. FENWICK gave Notice that he would repeat his Question, and would also ask the right hon. Gentleman to state further why the offer of the men was refused.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD ACTS — AMERICAN REFINED LARD.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by George H. Webster, of Chicago, before the Committee at Washington, as reported in *The Chicago Tribune*; whether it is the case that the American so-called refined lard is composed of about 60 per cent of lard, 25 per cent of cotton seed oil, and 15 per cent of beef fats, and the mixture is stiffened with lard stearine; whether the manufacturers of lard in America use about \$4,000,000 worth of cotton seed oil, and about \$2,000,000

Mr. Raikes

worth of beef fats; whether a large portion of this adulterated lard is sold as a food in this country under the name of refined lard; and, whether the present Acts against adulteration will meet this case?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have not received a copy of *The Chicago Tribune*, referred to by the hon. Member; but they have official information as to the extensive use of cotton seed oil in the United States in the manufacture of lard. The substance of this information was published in *The Board of Trade Journal* for March. How far this adulterated lard is sold in the United Kingdom as food it would be impossible to say; but lard is imported in considerable quantities from the United States. As to how far existing Acts against adulteration will meet such a case, I am not in a position to give an authoritative opinion; but it would, no doubt, be contrary to the object of these Acts to sell an adulterated importation as genuine lard of home production.

LOTTERIES ACTS—WILLIAM STREET REFORM CLUB, DARWEN.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a lottery announced to be held on behalf of the William Street Reform Club, Darwen, on which occasion prizes consisting of a piano, a gold watch, and other articles are to be drawn; and, what steps he proposes to take in reference to the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have not received any information with regard to this lottery. The local police can prosecute if there is a sufficient case; and I do not propose to interfere.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—FELLOWSHIP IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any appointment has yet been made by the Senate of the Royal University of Ireland to the vacant Fellowship in Natural Philosophy caused by the resignation of the Very Rev. G. Molloy; and, whether he

can state the date of his resignation, and the cause of the delay in making the new appointment?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Senate of the Royal University informs me that the Very Rev. G. Molloy resigned his Fellowship as from the 18th of April, 1887. They have postponed filling the vacancy, pending their decision in regard to the conditions of appointment and tenure of Fellowships which they have had under consideration.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE VOLUNTEER PERMANENT STAFF—PLAIN DRESS OFF DUTY.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, Why it has been decided to withdraw from the Permanent Staff serving with the Volunteers the privilege of wearing plain clothes when not on duty, which they have hitherto enjoyed; whether Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps have been asked their opinion on the matter; and, whether, as a fact, the majority of Commanding Officers have exercised the discretion given them under "Army Order 84, 1st March, 1888," par. 474 (a.) to permit Sergeant Instructors to wear plain clothes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Members of the Permanent Staff of Volunteer corps serving on their Line engagement are soldiers of the Regular Army, and, as such, bound to appear in uniform. The matter is one of Army discipline, and would not be referred for the opinion of Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps. As, however, the circumstances under which Sergeant Instructors serve are sometimes peculiar, a discretion has been given to General Officers commanding Districts (but not to the Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps, as stated in my hon. Friend's Question) to allow, when expedient, a dispensation from the strict Rule.

DISTURBANCES (METROPOLIS), NOVEMBER 20—ACTION OF THE POLICE

MR. PICKERSGILL (Beth S.W.) asked the Sec^y the Home Department institute an inqui

otherwise, of the following statement made by Mr. William Smith, bath attendant, 51, Lever Street, Goswell Road, E.C. :—

"On Sunday afternoon, 20th November, 1887, about 3 o'clock, I was in a procession proceeding along Holborn to Hyde Park. As the procession approached Southampton Street, I saw a cordon of police drawn right across the roadway of Holborn. When the procession was from 20 to 30 yards from the police, the latter, without any notice or warning, ran towards the procession with their truncheons drawn. Before I had time to get out of the way, I was knocked down by a policeman with his fist. I was struck on the nose and mouth; three of my teeth were knocked out. I got up, and was immediately knocked down again by a blow from a policeman's baton over the right eye."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): If Mr. Smith will make his statements not through the hon. Member in this House, but to a magistrate or to the Commissioner of Police, they will be duly inquired into. I am informed that there is no record of his having made any complaint.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL— TRUSTEES OF MARRIAGE SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has considered how (if the Conversion Scheme is carried) performance is possible in the case of a covenant in a marriage settlement to transfer to the Trustees thereof, for benefit of the younger children within three months after covenantor's death, £50,000 Bank Three per Cent Annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the hon. Member will find that the case he puts is met by a sub-section inserted in the Bill on Tuesday last, which provides that—

"In any Act passed or instrument executed before the passing of this Act references to any stock liable to be converted or exchanged in pursuance of this Act may, if the stock is so converted or exchanged, be construed as references to new stock."

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)— SHERIFF CLERKSHIP OF FORFARSHIRE.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Sheriff Clerkship of Forfarshire

Mr. Fickergill

has been filled up by the appointment of a gentleman holding the office of Clerk to the Justices of the Peace; and, if so, whether it is intended that he shall hold both offices?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the first part of the Question Yes, and the second No.

CRIMINAL LAW—EXECUTIONS AT HEREFORD—THE EXECUTIONER.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of James Berry, the executioner employed to hang two men at Hereford on the 20th of March last, who is reported in the local papers to have been

"Fêted at a smoking concert at one of the hotels in Hereford on the evening preceding the execution, Berry himself being a performer;"

and, whether, if such a report be true, he will take steps to prevent the repetition of such proceedings on the part of the officer charged with the duty of carrying into effect the extreme penalty of the law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen a report in the local papers to the effect stated in the Question. The hon. Baronet is aware that the executioner is appointed by the Sheriff; and neither the Prison Commissioners nor the Secretary of State have any control over him or his movements. In 1885 the Governors of Prisons were instructed by the Secretary of State to inform the Sheriff that it was desirable that the executioner should be required to reside and sleep in the prison. I will consider whether, by additional instructions, I can prevent a repetition of such proceedings as the hon. Baronet has referred to.

WAR OFFICE—THE ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the War Office to prolong the period of foreign service for officers of the Army Medical Staff; and, whether, in the event of such an event

taking place, any compensation will be given for the increased risk?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horn-castle): The length of the term of foreign service will be extended by one year in all departments in the interests of economy, and for the purpose of lengthening the period of service at home. As the service of an officer is available wherever Her Majesty may require it, no case for compensation arises.

IRELAND—DESTITUTION IN ARRAN.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secreeary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received any Reports from magistrates or others as to the destitution occasioned on the shallow soil of Arran by the past dry season; and, what measures have been undertaken by the Government to give seed potatoes or other relief to the Islanders?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government have received Reports on the present condition of the Arran Islanders, which appears to be mainly due to a failure of the potato crop last year. They have arranged for the distribution of seed potatoes; but a difficulty has arisen in regard to obtaining a suitable time. A private Relief Committee has been also formed, who are about to furnish the Islanders with a supply of potatoes for current consumption.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION, CO. DOWN—FAIR RENTS—DECISION OF MR. E. GREER, ANTRIM.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of Mr. Edward Greer, Chairman of the County Down Sub-Commission, delivered at Antrim on Monday last, whereby he dismissed the fair rent application of a leaseholder, named Edward Nelson, who is a tenant on the estate of Sir Richard Wallace; whether Mr. Greer held, on the authority of "Donoughmore v. Forrest," that the assignee of a lease which contains a clause against alienation, even though he had been accepted as tenant by the

landlord many years ago, is not entitled to the privileges of the Land Act of 1887 unless the lessor or landlord had, by endorsement in writing, consented to the alienation; whether it is a fact that upwards of 75 per cent of the agricultural leases in Ulster contain covenants against alienation, and that the practice generally followed on the assignment of leaseholds there was merely to enter the name of the assignee in the rent-book as the new tenant, and give him the rent receipts in his own name; whether he is aware that, if this narrow interpretation be put on the word "lessee" in "The Irish Land Act, 1887," more than half of the leaseholders in Ulster will be debarred from having fair rents fixed; and, whether, considering the importance of the subject, and the danger with which these leaseholders are threatened, the Government will take steps to have the benefit of the fair rent clause secured to all the leaseholders to whom it was intended to apply?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper this morning, and I, therefore, have been unable to obtain the necessary information as to the decision referred to in the Question. All I can say at present is, that I quite agree with the hon. Member as to the importance of the subject; and I shall take care to ascertain the grounds of the decision referred to, and consider them with reference to the working of the Act of last year.

MR. DILLON: I shall repeat the Question after Easter.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can say when the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill will be taken?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that, in regard to the second reading, he wished to consult the convenience of the hon. Mr. Burt and others who took an interest in it. The hon. Member would call him on the subject on the second reading acceptable.

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE—CONTRACTS WITH DE LA RUE & CO.

MR. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the contracts entered into by the Board of Inland Revenue in 1880 with the firm of De la Rue and Company, Whether he has called upon the Board of Inland Revenue for any explanation of the circumstances under which those contracts were made?

MR. HANBURY (Preston) also asked, Whether the Inland Revenue Department itself had made any contract with Messrs. De La Rue & Co. for the supply of its own Department?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I did not call upon the Board of Inland Revenue for such an explanation, for they at once communicated with the Treasury on the subject, and inclosed a copy of a Minute drawn up and signed by Sir Charles Herries, who, in 1880, was Chairman of the Board, in which the circumstances under which the arrangements with Messrs. De La Rue were concluded are fully detailed. I propose to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the communication of the Board of Inland Revenue and of its inclosure. I may add that the Board—though they do not by any means accept the figures given by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General as correct, and I did not understand him to have any authentic information on the subject—have long been aware that, owing to the fall in prices and improved processes of production, it is tolerably certain that when the contract expires in 1890 considerable savings will be effected.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the new arrangements to be made in order to expedite the hearing of fair rent applications in the County of Down, Whether he can now state what those arrangements are?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied)

said: As has been already stated within the past few days, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the arrears in cases awaiting a hearing to have fair rents fixed in Ireland. They are not at present in a position to state what steps the Land Commissioners will take as regards individual counties; but they must manifestly be guided by considerations of the general claims of the public.

MR. M'CARTAN: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state when he will be in a position to give us the information?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot give the date.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COMMISSION—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has ascertained what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a preliminary Report on Technical Education; and, whether they intend to present such a Report?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No, Sir; I have not been able to ascertain what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a Report on Technical Education.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) (a Member of the Commission) said, he might be allowed to state that the Commission had considered the question on the preceding day, and had decided not to make a preliminary Report for the present.

JOINT STOCK LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES—INVESTMENTS.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can state approximately the total sum which has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the passage of the Act of 1862?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have no information which would enable me to state, even approximately, what sum has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the Act of 1862.

FINANCE, &c.—SURPLUSES OF CIVIL LIST CLASSES.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is now any objection of a public character to laying upon the Table of the House a Copy of such Directions as may have been made from time to time by the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury, in conformity with the provisions of 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, with reference to any savings or surplus on any of the Classes of the Civil List, that at the end of each year it shall be lawful for the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being, or any three or more of them, to direct the same to be applied in aid of the charges or expenses of any other Class (except the Fifth Class), or of any charge or charges upon Her Majesty's Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, appear to be most expedient?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I can hold out no hope of laying upon the Table any directions issued by the Treasury in regard to the savings on the Civil List. The arrangement between the Crown and Parliament is that the Civil List is only brought under the review of the House—(1) when there has been an excess on the expenditure; (2) on the demise of the Sovereign; or (3) when an application is made for a provision in excess of the amount fixed. None of these circumstances at present exist, and the question is not, therefore, one with which the House can deal. I would remind the hon. Member that on the 19th of March, 1872, a similar question was brought before the House by Sir Charles Dilke. The Return was refused by the Government of the day, and after debate the view of the Government was supported by an overwhelming majority. The 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, is to the effect that the Treasury may direct savings in any Class of the Civil List to be applied at the end of the year in aid of any other Classes (except the Fifth Class, Pensions), or of any charge on Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, be most expedient.

MR. E. ROBERTSON asked whether the refusal of the House was not due

rather to a speech made just before by Sir Charles Dilke at Newcastle?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It may be so; but I have no information on the matter.

RAILWAYS AND DEEP SEA FISHERY HARBOURS (IRELAND).

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Government intend to propose measures to give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Commission appointed by the present Government to consider the question of an extension of railways and of deep sea fishery harbours in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Commissioners themselves settled the order in which they should deal with the questions referred to them, and selected the drainage question as the one which was most urgent. Her Majesty's Government are pushing forward the steps necessary for giving effect to the drainage part of the Commissioners' Report; but they are not prepared to deal with the further questions of extension of railways and deep sea fishery harbours, both of which involve large financial arrangements, and both of which will require legislation, till they have had more time to consider the matter.

COLONEL NOLAN: Do the Government intend to deal with the matter this Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not yet able to say; but I hope to be able to inform the hon. and gallant Gentleman after Easter.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE WEXFORD UNION.

MR. J. BARRY (Wexford, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Has his attention been called to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union, passed on Saturday last, as follows:—

"That we are greatly disappointed at the action of the Land Commissioners in only setting down 137 cases for hearing in this Union at the forthcoming Sub-Commission; whereas we understand that nearly 1,000 applications from this Union to fix fair rents were made before the 1st of November, 1887;"

and, when do the Government hope to announce their intention as to strengthening the Land Commissions?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I

tention has only been drawn to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union by the Question of the hon. Member. Her Majesty's Government will do what they can to hasten the hearing of the applications to fix fair rents.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, this was about the 40th time that the right hon. Gentleman had promised that. He asked, would the right hon. Gentleman now give them some definite idea as to whether the Government in Ireland were waiting until the tenants' six months' period of redemption ran out, when their last chance of benefiting by the Land Act of the past year would be gone before taking steps in the matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly aware of the difficulty. He knows that it is not such an easy and simple matter as it looks to increase the strength of the Land Commission to the extent that is necessary. The Government fully recognize the importance and urgency of the matter, and they are doing their best to press it forward.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state, in view of the fact that four months have now elapsed since something over 40,000 cases have been put into the Land Court, and that they have done nothing to meet the emergency, when they will be able to do something?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, will he be kind enough to state for the information of those who are interested in this question—and they include every Member representing an agricultural constituency in Ireland—whether he can give the information required before the House adjourns for Easter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really do not know what answer the hon. Member expects beyond that which I have already given—namely, that I am doing all I can to press on the matter. That, surely, ought to satisfy the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us some indication of what are the difficulties standing in his way? Is it that there are not a sufficient number of applicants for Sub-Commissionerships?

Mr. W. H. Smith

MR. T. M. HEALY: In order to avoid attention being called to the subject by a Motion for the adjournment of the House, will the right hon. Gentleman state whether there are any more difficulties in the way of the present Government than existed in 1881, when means were immediately taken, after the passing of the Land Act of that year, to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners; and, whether there were not more applications in 1881 than there are now in 1888; and what are the difficulties which the Government experience?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Obviously, I cannot answer the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question as to what was done in 1881 without Notice; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that there are necessarily difficulties in the matter. There are Treasury difficulties, and there are difficulties in appointing the necessary Sub-Commissioners—if, indeed, the method to be adopted by the Government necessarily consists of appointing extra Sub-Commissioners. But I am desirous, if I can, of finding some other method than that, and that necessarily causes delay.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

In reply to Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside),

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.), said, his object in putting down the Bill for the 5th of April was that he should then be able to name a day for the second reading. He was anxious to take the second reading as soon as possible, in order that the Bill might be referred to a Grand Committee.

INDIA—THE SIKKIM EXPEDITION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any news had been received to-day from Sikkim?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Oatham): I am happy to be able to inform the House that a telegram received this morning from the Viceroy at Calcutta states that—

“The Lingtu Fort has been occupied without resistance; garrison has fled; fort now being demolished.”

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton),
 in rising to call attention to the Report
 of the Select Committee on Perpetual
 Pensions, and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, steps
 should be forthwith taken to give effect to the
 Report of the said Committee; and that, con-
 sidering the large and increasing annual charge
 upon the country for general pensions and non-
 effective services, it is desirable to adopt mea-
 sures for the thorough revision of the entire
 pension system,"

said, that the subject divided itself into
 two heads, of which the first—namely,
 that relating to perpetual pensions—
 had now become of comparatively minor
 importance, for since the matter was
 first raised in the House a large number
 of perpetual pensions had disappeared
 by commutation. The second portion
 of the Motion was not only very much
 the more important, but was also much
 the more difficult, because on the first
 he was fortified in the action he now
 took by the unanimous Report of the
 Select Committee, on which the Govern-
 ment's own Attorney General sat; on
 the second—though he could easily
 point out the evil—he did not pretend
 he could be as clear as to what the
 proper remedy for the evil was. It
 might be—though he hoped it would
 not be—that the noble Lord the Mem-
 ber for South Paddington (Lord Ran-
 dolph Churchill) would think that he
 had a right to complain that in the
 second part of the Motion he was
 trespassing on the ground he was at-
 tempting. If he did, he should plead
 as an excuse that in one of the noble
 Lord's speeches during the vacation he
 held out to him an inducement to take
 the matter up in the House. He would
 now refer to the Report of the Select
 Committee, in which they were unani-
 mous, although the Radical element in
 the Committee was in a perfectly small
 minority. The Committee reported—

"That pensions, allowances, and payments
 ought not in future to be granted in perpetuity,
 on the ground that all such grants should be
 limited to the persons actually rendering the
 services intended to be rewarded by such grants,
 and that such rewards should be wholly or in
 main part defrayed by the generations bene-
 fitted by the services so recognized. That it
 is unjust that future generations should be
 burdened with payments to persons who have
 had no share in the original services. That
 offices with salaries and without duties, or with
 merely nominal duties, should be abolished.
 That all existing perpetual pensions, allowances,
 and payments, and all hereditary offices should
 be determined and abolished. That in all such
 commutations the Lords of the Treasury should
 take into consideration the circumstances of
 such pension, allowance, or payment, and
 whether or not any real service had been
 rendered by the original grantee or was now
 performed by the actual holder of the office."

The Committee further reported—

"That in all cases the method of commuta-
 tion ought to involve and insure a real and
 substantial saving to the nation."

He now asked the House to give effect
 to the recommendation of the Committee,
 and in doing so he trusted that he should
 be fortunate enough not to raise any
 kind of Party feeling, and that he
 should win the consent of the Govern-
 ment to carry out the recommendations
 of a Committee of which their own
 Attorney General was a Member. There
 now remained uncommuted 76
 perpetual pensions, involving an annual
 payment of between £60,000 and
 £70,000, and they varied from £19,000
 a-year to £1 and a few shillings a-year.
 He, however, proposed to deal on this
 occasion with only two, one relating to
 the Duchy of Cornwall and one relating
 to the Duchy of Lancaster. With re-
 gard to the former, amounting to
 £16,216, it appeared that it was granted
 in 1838 to the Duchy of Cornwall for
 the loss of the annual revenue of
 £11,536 derived from tin coinage duties,
 post groats, and white rents. It ap-
 peared, however, that for the 10 years
 preceding the 1st of October, 1838, the
 Duchy of Cornwall had only received
 £10 per annum in respect of these
 post groats. By a Treasury Minute
 dated 1839, it was stated that His
 Majesty King William IV. had ex-
 pressed his intention that the post groats
 in Cornwall should cease after the 5th
 of April, 1841, on the termination of
 the existing lease, and that Her present
 Majesty on her accession had been
 pleased to confirm such intentions, and

tions. They may also, by their agreements for sale, provide for the payment of interest by tenants pending the completion of the sale. It is expected that over £200,000 will be issued in the present month.

VACCINATION ACT—MR. LESLIE CREERY, CLERK TO THE EAST ASHFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. McLAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether Mr. Leslie Creery, who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians, advises the Board to prosecute offenders against the Vaccination Act, is the same Mr. Leslie Creery who, as Clerk to the East Ashford Magistrates, advises the Bench as to what fines and costs should be inflicted on them; if so, whether it is in conformity with the Regulations of the Local Government Board that the legal adviser to the prosecutors should also be legal adviser to the magistrates; and, whether, in his capacity as clerk to the magistrates, he receives a portion of the costs of each of the cases, such as for summonses, and copies, administering oaths, &c. which, in his capacity as Clerk to the Guardians, he has advised should be prosecuted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: Mr. Creery is both Clerk to the East Ashford Board of Guardians and also Clerk to the Justices of the Division. The Local Government Board Regulations do not deal with the point of both these appointments being held by the same officer. I am informed by Mr. Creery that in his capacity as Clerk to the Justices he receives the costs and fees payable on all convictions; but they are at once credited to the County Authority, as he is, and has been for some time, paid by a fixed salary.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Committee of Council on Education have now before them any Schemes of the Charity Commissioners involving the alteration of Trusts of any Charities; and, if so, whether he will

state the names of the Charities and the places to which they belong; the volume and page of the Charity Commissioners Reports in which the original Trusts are given; and, the amount of property and income approximately with which it is proposed to deal?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): All Schemes of the Charity Commissioners which are before the Education Department are submitted to that Department under the provisions of the Endowed School Acts; and all those Schemes provide, in accordance with Section 9 of the Act, 1863, for the alteration of the existing Trusts of the Endowments dealt with. The information asked as to names, places, and amounts of income is from time to time, stated in the Appendix to the Annual Reports of the Commissioners. The Report for 1887 has been forwarded to the Home Office for presentation to Her Majesty, and will shortly be laid on the Table of the House. The information thus given removes all difficulty in referring in any particular case to the original Reports of the Commissioners of Charity (1818-37), which Reports are fully indexed. I will consider the possibility of giving an earlier publicity to the Scheme of the Commissioners in the localities affected.

GENERAL CATTLE DISEASES FUND—INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the total amount of the income of the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Contagious Diseases Animals Act in 1878, and what is the balance (if any) now to the credit of that Fund; what was the amount in the £1 assessed by the Local Government Board under the Contagious Diseases Animals Act, on the various Unions in Ireland, and the dates upon which said assessments were paid; and, whether, since, as directed by the recent Order in Council, steps are about being taken to stamp out pleuropneumonia in the Dublin District, by the compulsory slaughter of all cattle that have been in any way, however remotely, exposed to contagion, and as such compulsory slaughter will benefit the cattle trade not of Dublin alone, but of the entire country, it is the intention

Colonel King-Harman

of the Irish Government to take advantage of section 83, sub-section 8, of the Act of 1878, to increase the poundage rate throughout the entire of Ireland to an extent under said sub-section sufficient to meet the claims for compensation arising out of the compulsory slaughter of healthy animals?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The total amount received into the General Cattle Diseases Fund since the passing of the Act in 1878 has been £92,648 6s. 2½d. The balance to the credit of the Fund on the 1st of the present month amounted to £9,168 10s. 4d. The assessments referred to have been on each occasion ¼d. in the £1. The dates on which they were made are as follow:—December 24, 1879, February 3, 1881, June 19, 1882, December 13, 1883, July 22, 1885, and May 27, 1887—averaging about £14,300 each levy. Pleuro-pneumonia has been practically confined to the Dublin District for a very considerable period; and there can be no doubt that the continued and continuous existence of the disease in the Dublin dairy-yards is due mainly to their insanitary condition and the manner in which the cattle kept in them are housed and fed, and to concealment of disease from the proper authorities. Under these circumstances, it would be manifestly unfair to tax the whole of Ireland to meet cases for compensation in the Dublin District on an equal scale with the ratepayers of the affected Unions. The Government, however, recognize that the recent Order, while absolutely necessary, may press severely on the rates of the Dublin Unions if their resources are at once called upon to meet all the cases for compensation; and they are considering a scheme by which assistance may be given to the districts mainly affected by the Order in the event of its provisions being promptly obeyed and carried out.

**LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND)—
GRANTS IN AID.**

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for **MR. O'DOHERTY**) (Donegal, N.) asked **Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer**, What proportion the annual amount raised by county cess, borough rate, and other town rates bears to the total amount raised by local taxation in

Ireland; are any grants in aid of such county cess and town rates made from the Imperial Exchequer; and, why are the cesspayers practically excluded from such relief in aid?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (**Mr. GOSCHEN**) (St. George's, Hanover Square): According to the last Return, the total amount raised by local rates in Ireland is £2,797,451, and the county cess, borough rate, and other town rates amount to £1,760,125, or 63 per cent of the whole. The grant for the maintenance of pauper lunatics goes in aid of the county cess. It amounts to about £105,000. The counties also benefit by the cost of prosecutors and witnesses in Crown cases, which were formally provided for by presentment, being now borne by the Imperial Exchequer and by a small grant made to certain public infirmaries. But these are not, strictly speaking, grants in aid of the county cess. In the same way in towns in which the Commissioners are Urban Sanitary Authorities half the cost of the sanitary officers' salaries is borne by the Government; but it is the poor rates which are relieved by this, rather than the town rates proper. I think I may take the hon. Member's Question as indicating his wish that any further relief given to local rates in Ireland should be applied in aid of the county cess and town rates. I cannot, of course, make any promise now; but I note his wish.

**POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—PARCEL
POST—SUNDAY WORK.**

MR. TUIE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the officers of the Parcel Post in Dublin are at present obliged to work for eight hours every alternate Sunday without any extra pay, and are only paid for every hour they are on duty after the first eight hours; whether, when the Parcel Post was established in 1883, the then Postmaster General gave an undertaking that no Sunday duty would be expected from the officers engaged in that service; and, whether, having regard to the fact that in London the Parcel Post officers are paid for every hour they are on duty on Sundays, the officers in the Irish Department will be placed on the same footing?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (**Mr. RAIKES**) (Cambridge University), in

reply, said, he had put himself in communication with the Department; and as soon as he had received the desired information he would answer the Question of the hon. Member.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE ALNWICK BENCH—CONVICTION FOR STEALING JETTISONED TIMBER.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Star* newspaper on the 21st of March, 1888, that—

“On the 31st of December, 1886, five men and one girl were brought before the Alnwick Bench of Magistrates, for having brought off the beach some pieces of timber,”

and were fined—

“£3, odd, each, with the alternative of one month each in gaol for the men, and 14 days for the girl;”

whether the girl was taken to gaol on Saturday last, and those of the men who have not paid the fine are also “threatened” with imprisonment; whether the timber was washed in with the tide, and practically valueless; and, whether he can state the reason why the policeman refused the “offer of the men to go to gaol.”

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Clerk to the Alnwick Justices that five men and a girl were convicted on the 22nd of December, 1886, for having in their possession timber which had been jettisoned from a stranded vessel, and had been salvaged by the fishermen and stacked on the shore. The statutory penalty for this offence is £20, or six months' imprisonment. Four men were fined £2; one man and the girl 10s.; the alternative being a month and a fortnight's imprisonment respectively. Time for payment was given in each case. On the 10th of this month, three of the men only having paid, the Justices issued commitments against the rest. The girl paid on the 17th instant. The timber was not valueless; two of the pieces found in the possession of one of the defendants were valued at 4s. 2d., and four pieces in the possession of another defendant were valued at 6s. 10d. The Justices did not wish to send the men to prison if they could help it.

MR. FENWICK asked, whether it was not true that the men, during the

time of the trade dispute to which the right hon. Gentleman had just referred, said that they could not pay the fine, but offered to serve their term of imprisonment during the trade dispute; whether their offer to go to prison was not refused by the policeman; whether they did not offer to pay the amount of the fine by instalments; and whether that offer was also refused? He also asked the right hon. Gentleman to state why the sentence was deferred for such a length of time?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I can only answer the last part of the Question. I understand the Justices to say that the payment was deferred from time to time, and that the Justices were unwilling to send them to prison, inasmuch as the men were out on strike, and unable to earn wages. Time was given on five occasions, until ultimately three of the men paid; and the Justices thought it was unfair to those three if proceedings were not taken against the others.

MR. FENWICK said, the men told the policeman that they were unable to pay, and that they preferred to go to prison during the time of the trade dispute. Afterwards, when the men were in employment, they took them from their homes when they had offered to pay the amount of the fines by instalments.

MR. MATTHEWS: If the hon. Member will give me particulars, I will make inquiries on the subject.

MR. FENWICK gave Notice that he would repeat his Question, and would also ask the right hon. Gentleman to state further why the offer of the men was refused.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD ACTS—AMERICAN REFINED LARD.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by George H. Webster, of Chicago, before the Committee at Washington, as reported in *The Chicago Tribune*; whether it is the case that the American so-called refined lard is composed of about 60 per cent of lard, 25 per cent of cotton seed oil, and 15 per cent of beef fats, and the mixture is stiffened with lard stearine; whether the manufacturers of lard in America use about \$4,000,000 worth of cotton seed oil, and about \$2,000,000

Mr. Raikes

worth of beef fats; whether a large portion of this adulterated lard is sold as a food in this country under the name of refined lard; and, whether the present Acts against adulteration will meet this case?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade have not received a copy of *The Chicago Tribune*, referred to by the hon. Member; but they have official information as to the extensive use of cotton seed oil in the United States in the manufacture of lard. The substance of this information was published in *The Board of Trade Journal* for March. How far this adulterated lard is sold in the United Kingdom as food it would be impossible to say; but lard is imported in considerable quantities from the United States. As to how far existing Acts against adulteration will meet such a case, I am not in a position to give an authoritative opinion; but it would, no doubt, be contrary to the object of these Acts to sell an adulterated importation as genuine lard of home production.

LOTTERIES ACTS—WILLIAM STREET REFORM CLUB, DARWEN.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a lottery announced to be held on behalf of the William Street Reform Club, Darwen, on which occasion prizes consisting of a piano, a gold watch, and other articles are to be drawn; and, what steps he proposes to take in reference to the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have not received any information with regard to this lottery. The local police can prosecute if there is a sufficient case; and I do not propose to interfere.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—FELLOWSHIP IN NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any appointment has yet been made by the Senate of the Royal University of Ireland to the vacant Fellowship in Natural Philosophy caused by the resignation of the Very Rev. G. Molloy; and, whether he

can state the date of his resignation, and the cause of the delay in making the new appointment?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Senate of the Royal University informs me that the Very Rev. G. Molloy resigned his Fellowship as from the 18th of April, 1887. They have postponed filling the vacancy, pending their decision in regard to the conditions of appointment and tenure of Fellowships which they have had under consideration.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — THE VOLUNTEER PERMANENT STAFF—PLAIN DRESS OFF DUTY.

MR. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, Why it has been decided to withdraw from the Permanent Staff serving with the Volunteers the privilege of wearing plain clothes when not on duty, which they have hitherto enjoyed; whether Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps have been asked their opinion on the matter; and, whether, as a fact, the majority of Commanding Officers have exercised the discretion given them under "Army Order 84, 1st March, 1888," par. 474 (a.) to permit Sergeant Instructors to wear plain clothes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Members of the Permanent Staff of Volunteer corps serving on their Line engagement are soldiers of the Regular Army, and, as such, bound to appear in uniform. The matter is one of Army discipline, and would not be referred for the opinion of Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps. As, however, the circumstances under which Sergeant Instructors serve are sometimes peculiar, a discretion has been given to General Officers commanding Districts (but not to the Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps, as stated in my hon. Friend's Question) to allow, when expedient, a dispensation from the strict Rule.

DISTURBANCES (METROPOLIS), NOVEMBER 20—ACTION OF THE POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will institute an inquiry into the truth, or

otherwise, of the following statement made by Mr. William Smith, bath attendant, 51, Lever Street, Goswell Road, E.C. :—

"On Sunday afternoon, 20th November, 1887, about 3 o'clock, I was in a procession proceeding along Holborn to Hyde Park. As the procession approached Southampton Street, I saw a cordon of police drawn right across the roadway of Holborn. When the procession was from 20 to 30 yards from the police, the latter, without any notice or warning, ran towards the procession with their truncheons drawn. Before I had time to get out of the way, I was knocked down by a policeman with his fist. I was struck on the nose and mouth; three of my teeth were knocked out. I got up, and was immediately knocked down again by a blow from a policeman's baton over the right eye."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): If Mr. Smith will make his statements not through the hon. Member in this House, but to a magistrate or to the Commissioner of Police, they will be duly inquired into. I am informed that there is no record of his having made any complaint.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL— TRUSTEES OF MARRIAGE SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has considered how (if the Conversion Scheme is carried) performance is possible in the case of a covenant in a marriage settlement to transfer to the Trustees thereof, for benefit of the younger children within three months after covenantor's death, £50,000 Bank Three per Cent Annuities?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the hon. Member will find that the case he puts is met by a sub-section inserted in the Bill on Tuesday last, which provides that—

"In any Act passed or instrument executed before the passing of this Act references to any stock liable to be converted or exchanged in pursuance of this Act may, if the stock is so converted or exchanged, be construed as references to new stock."

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)— SHERIFF CLERKSHIP OF FORFARSHIRE.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Sheriff Clerkship of Forfarshire

Mr. Fickergill

has been filled up by the appointment of a gentleman holding the office of Clerk to the Justices of the Peace; and, if so, whether it is intended that he shall hold both offices?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the first part of the Question Yes, and the second No.

CRIMINAL LAW—EXECUTIONS AT HEREFORD—THE EXECUTIONER.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of James Berry, the executioner employed to hang two men at Hereford on the 20th of March last, who is reported in the local papers to have been

"Fêted at a smoking concert at one of the hotels in Hereford on the evening preceding the execution, Berry himself being a performer;"

and, whether, if such a report be true, he will take steps to prevent the repetition of such proceedings on the part of the officer charged with the duty of carrying into effect the extreme penalty of the law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen a report in the local papers to the effect stated in the Question. The hon. Baronet is aware that the executioner is appointed by the Sheriff; and neither the Prison Commissioners nor the Secretary of State have any control over him or his movements. In 1885 the Governors of Prisons were instructed by the Secretary of State to inform the Sheriff that it was desirable that the executioner should be required to reside and sleep in the prison. I will consider whether, by additional instructions, I can prevent a repetition of such proceedings as the hon. Baronet has referred to.

WAR OFFICE—THE ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the War Office to prolong the period of foreign service for officers of the Army Medical Staff; and, whether, in the event of such an event

taking place, any compensation will be given for the increased risk?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horn-castle): The length of the term of foreign service will be extended by one year in all departments in the interests of economy, and for the purpose of lengthening the period of service at home. As the service of an officer is available wherever Her Majesty may require it, no case for compensation arises.

IRELAND—DESTITUTION IN ARRAN.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secreeary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received any Reports from magistrates or others as to the destitution occasioned on the shallow soil of Arran by the past dry season; and, what measures have been undertaken by the Government to give seed potatoes or other relief to the Islanders?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government have received Reports on the present condition of the Arran Islanders, which appears to be mainly due to a failure of the potato crop last year. They have arranged for the distribution of seed potatoes; but a difficulty has arisen in regard to obtaining a suitable time. A private Relief Committee has been also formed, who are about to furnish the Islanders with a supply of potatoes for current consumption.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION, CO. DOWN—FAIR RENTS—DECISION OF MR. E. GREER, ANTRIM.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of Mr. Edward Greer, Chairman of the County Down Sub-Commission, delivered at Antrim on Monday last, whereby he dismissed the fair rent application of a leaseholder, named Edward Nelson, who is a tenant on the estate of Sir Richard Wallace; whether Mr. Greer held, on the authority of "Donoughmore v. Forrest," that the assignee of a lease which contains a clause against alienation, even though he had been accepted as tenant by the

landlord many years ago, is not entitled to the privileges of the Land Act of 1887 unless the lessor or landlord had, by endorsement in writing, consented to the alienation; whether it is a fact that upwards of 75 per cent of the agricultural leases in Ulster contain covenants against alienation, and that the practice generally followed on the assignment of leaseholds there was merely to enter the name of the assignee in the rent-book as the new tenant, and give him the rent receipts in his own name; whether he is aware that, if this narrow interpretation be put on the word "lessee" in "The Irish Land Act, 1887," more than half of the leaseholders in Ulster will be debarred from having fair rents fixed; and, whether, considering the importance of the subject, and the danger with which these leaseholders are threatened, the Government will take steps to have the benefit of the fair rent clause secured to all the leaseholders to whom it was intended to apply?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper this morning, and I, therefore, have been unable to obtain the necessary information as to the decision referred to in the Question. All I can say at present is, that I quite agree with the hon. Member as to the importance of the subject; and I shall take care to ascertain the grounds of the decision referred to, and consider them with reference to the working of the Act of last year.

MR. DILLON: I shall repeat the Question after Easter.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can say when the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill will be taken?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that, in regard to the second reading, he wished to consult the convenience of the hon. Member and others who took an interest in the Bill. If the hon. Member would communicate with him on the subject, he would fix the second reading for a day generally acceptable.

BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE—CONTRACTS WITH DE LA RUE & CO.

MR. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the contracts entered into by the Board of Inland Revenue in 1880 with the firm of De la Rue and Company, Whether he has called upon the Board of Inland Revenue for any explanation of the circumstances under which those contracts were made?

MR. HANBURY (Preston) also asked, Whether the Inland Revenue Department itself had made any contract with Messrs. De La Rue & Co. for the supply of its own Department?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I did not call upon the Board of Inland Revenue for such an explanation, for they at once communicated with the Treasury on the subject, and inclosed a copy of a Minute drawn up and signed by Sir Charles Herries, who, in 1880, was Chairman of the Board, in which the circumstances under which the arrangements with Messrs. De La Rue were concluded are fully detailed. I propose to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the communication of the Board of Inland Revenue and of its inclosure. I may add that the Board—though they do not by any means accept the figures given by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General as correct, and I did not understand him to have any authentic information on the subject—have long been aware that, owing to the fall in prices and improved processes of production, it is tolerably certain that when the contract expires in 1890 considerable savings will be effected.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the new arrangements to be made in order to expedite the hearing of fair rent applications in the County of Down, Whether he can now state what those arrangements are?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied)

said: As has been already stated within the past few days, the Government are anxiously considering the question of the arrears in cases awaiting a hearing to have fair rents fixed in Ireland. They are not at present in a position to state what steps the Land Commissioners will take as regards individual counties; but they must manifestly be guided by considerations of the general claims of the public.

MR. M'CARTAN: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman state when he will be in a position to give us the information?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot give the date.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COMMISSION—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has ascertained what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a preliminary Report on Technical Education; and, whether they intend to present such a Report?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No, Sir; I have not been able to ascertain what are the intentions of the Elementary Education Commission as to presenting a Report on Technical Education.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) (a Member of the Commission) said, he might be allowed to state that the Commission had considered the question on the preceding day, and had decided not to make a preliminary Report for the present.

JOINT STOCK LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES—INVESTMENTS.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can state approximately the total sum which has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the passage of the Act of 1862?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have no information which would enable me to state, even approximately, what sum has been invested in Joint Stock Limited Liability Companies since the Act of 1862.

FINANCE, &c.—SURPLUSES OF CIVIL LIST CLASSES.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is now any objection of a public character to laying upon the Table of the House a Copy of such Directions as may have been made from time to time by the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury, in conformity with the provisions of 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, with reference to any savings or surplus on any of the Classes of the Civil List, that at the end of each year it shall be lawful for the Lord High Treasurer or Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being, or any three or more of them, to direct the same to be applied in aid of the charges or expenses of any other Class (except the Fifth Class), or of any charge or charges upon Her Majesty's Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, appear to be most expedient?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I can hold out no hope of laying upon the Table any directions issued by the Treasury in regard to the savings on the Civil List. The arrangement between the Crown and Parliament is that the Civil List is only brought under the review of the House—(1) when there has been an excess on the expenditure; (2) on the demise of the Sovereign; or (3) when an application is made for a provision in excess of the amount fixed. None of these circumstances at present exist, and the question is not, therefore, one with which the House can deal. I would remind the hon. Member that on the 19th of March, 1872, a similar question was brought before the House by Sir Charles Dilke. The Return was refused by the Government of the day, and after debate the view of the Government was supported by an overwhelming majority. The 1 *Vict.* c. 2, s. 9, is to the effect that the Treasury may direct savings in any Class of the Civil List to be applied at the end of the year in aid of any other Classes (except the Fifth Class, Pensions), or of any charge on Civil List Revenues, in such manner as may, under the circumstances, be most expedient.

MR. E. ROBERTSON asked whether the refusal of the House was not due

rather to a speech made just before by Sir Charles Dilke at Newcastle?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It may be so; but I have no information on the matter.

RAILWAYS AND DEEP SEA FISHERY HARBOURS (IRELAND).

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Government intend to propose measures to give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Commission appointed by the present Government to consider the question of an extension of railways and of deep sea fishery harbours in Ireland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Commissioners themselves settled the order in which they should deal with the questions referred to them, and selected the drainage question as the one which was most urgent. Her Majesty's Government are pushing forward the steps necessary for giving effect to the drainage part of the Commissioners' Report; but they are not prepared to deal with the further questions of extension of railways and deep sea fishery harbours, both of which involve large financial arrangements, and both of which will require legislation, till they have had more time to consider the matter.

COLONEL NOLAN: Do the Government intend to deal with the matter this Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not yet able to say; but I hope to be able to inform the hon. and gallant Gentleman after Easter.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE WEXFORD UNION.

MR. J. BARRY (Wexford, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Has his attention been called to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union, passed on Saturday last, as follows:—

"That we are greatly disappointed at the action of the Land Commissioners in only setting down 137 cases for hearing in this Union at the forthcoming Sub-Commission; whereas we understand that nearly 1,000 applications from this Union to fix fair rents were made before the 1st of November, 1887;"

and, when do the Government hope to announce their intention as to strengthening the Land Commissions?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): My at-

tention has only been drawn to the Resolution of the Guardians of Wexford Union by the Question of the hon. Member. Her Majesty's Government will do what they can to hasten the hearing of the applications to fix fair rents.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, this was about the 40th time that the right hon. Gentleman had promised that. He asked, would the right hon. Gentleman now give them some definite idea as to whether the Government in Ireland were waiting until the tenants' six months' period of redemption ran out, when their last chance of benefiting by the Land Act of the past year would be gone before taking steps in the matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly aware of the difficulty. He knows that it is not such an easy and simple matter as it looks to increase the strength of the Land Commission to the extent that is necessary. The Government fully recognize the importance and urgency of the matter, and they are doing their best to press it forward.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state, in view of the fact that four months have now elapsed since something over 40,000 cases have been put into the Land Court, and that they have done nothing to meet the emergency, when they will be able to do something?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, will he be kind enough to state for the information of those who are interested in this question—and they include every Member representing an agricultural constituency in Ireland—whether he can give the information required before the House adjourns for Easter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really do not know what answer the hon. Member expects beyond that which I have already given—namely, that I am doing all I can to press on the matter. That, surely, ought to satisfy the hon. Member.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us some indication of what are the difficulties standing in his way? Is it that there are not a sufficient number of applicants for Sub-Commissionerships?

Mr. W. H. Smith

MR. T. M. HEALY: In order to avoid attention being called to the subject by a Motion for the adjournment of the House, will the right hon. Gentleman state whether there are any more difficulties in the way of the present Government than existed in 1881, when means were immediately taken, after the passing of the Land Act of that year, to appoint a sufficient number of Sub-Commissioners; and, whether there were not more applications in 1881 than there are now in 1888; and what are the difficulties which the Government experience?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Obviously, I cannot answer the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question as to what was done in 1881 without Notice; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that there are necessarily difficulties in the matter. There are Treasury difficulties, and there are difficulties in appointing the necessary Sub-Commissioners—if, indeed, the method to be adopted by the Government necessarily consists of appointing extra Sub-Commissioners. But I am desirous, if I can, of finding some other method than that, and that necessarily causes delay.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

In reply to Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside),

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.), said, his object in putting down the Bill for the 5th of April was that he should then be able to name a day for the second reading. He was anxious to take the second reading as soon as possible, in order that the Bill might be referred to a Grand Committee.

INDIA—THE SIKKIM EXPEDITION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any news had been received to-day from Sikkim?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (SIR JOHN GORST) (Chatham): I am happy to be able to inform the House that a telegram received this morning from the Viceroy at Calcutta states that—

"The Lingtu Fort has been occupied without resistance; garrison has fled; fort now being demolished."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton),
 in rising to call attention to the Report
 of the Select Committee on Perpetual
 Pensions, and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, steps
 should be forthwith taken to give effect to the
 Report of the said Committee; and that, con-
 sidering the large and increasing annual charge
 upon the country for general pensions and non-
 effective services, it is desirable to adopt mea-
 sures for the thorough revision of the entire
 pension system,"

said, that the subject divided itself into
 two heads, of which the first—namely,
 that relating to perpetual pensions—
 had now become of comparatively minor
 importance, for since the matter was
 first raised in the House a large number
 of perpetual pensions had disappeared
 by commutation. The second portion
 of the Motion was not only very much
 the more important, but was also much
 the more difficult, because on the first
 he was fortified in the action he now
 took by the unanimous Report of the
 Select Committee, on which the Govern-
 ment's own Attorney General sat; on
 the second—though he could easily
 point out the evil—he did not pretend
 he could be as clear as to what the
 proper remedy for the evil was. It
 might be—though he hoped it would
 not be—that the noble Lord the Mem-
 ber for South Paddington (Lord Ran-
 dolph Churchill) would think that he
 had a right to complain that in the
 second part of the Motion he was
 trespassing on the ground he was at-
 tempting. If he did, he should plead
 as an excuse that in one of the noble
 Lord's speeches during the vacation he
 held out to him an inducement to take
 the matter up in the House. He would
 now refer to the Report of the Select
 Committee, in which they were unani-
 mous, although the Radical element in
 the Committee was in a perfectly small
 minority. The Committee reported—

"That pensions, allowances, and payments
 ought not in future to be granted in perpetuity,
 on the ground that all such grants should be
 limited to the persons actually rendering the
 services intended to be rewarded by such grants,
 and that such rewards should be wholly or in
 main part defrayed by the generations bene-
 fitted by the services so recognized. That it
 is unjust that future generations should be
 burdened with payments to persons who have
 had no share in the original services. That
 offices with salaries and without duties, or with
 merely nominal duties, should be abolished.
 That all existing perpetual pensions, allowances,
 and payments, and all hereditary offices should
 be determined and abolished. That in all such
 commutations the Lords of the Treasury should
 take into consideration the circumstances of
 such pension, allowance, or payment, and
 whether or not any real service had been
 rendered by the original grantee or was now
 performed by the actual holder of the office."

The Committee further reported—

"That in all cases the method of commuta-
 tion ought to involve and insure a real and
 substantial saving to the nation."

He now asked the House to give effect
 to the recommendation of the Committee,
 and in doing so he trusted that he should
 be fortunate enough not to raise any
 kind of Party feeling, and that he
 should win the consent of the Govern-
 ment to carry out the recommendations
 of a Committee of which their own
 Attorney General was a Member.
 There now remained uncommuted 76
 perpetual pensions, involving an annual
 payment of between £60,000 and
 £70,000, and they varied from £19,000
 a-year to £1 and a few shillings a-year.
 He, however, proposed to deal on this
 occasion with only two, one relating to
 the Duchy of Cornwall and one relating
 to the Duchy of Lancaster. With re-
 gard to the former, amounting to
 £16,216, it appeared that it was granted
 in 1838 to the Duchy of Cornwall for
 the loss of the annual revenue of
 £11,536 derived from tin coinage duties,
 post groats, and white rents. It ap-
 peared, however, that for the 10 years
 preceding the 1st of October, 1838, the
 Duchy of Cornwall had only received
 £10 per annum in respect of these
 post groats. By a Treasury Minute
 dated 1839, it was stated that His
 Majesty King William IV. had ex-
 pressed his intention that the post groats
 in Cornwall should cease after the 5th
 of April, 1841, on the termination of
 the existing lease, and that Her present
 Majesty on her accession had been
 pleased to confirm such intentions, and

that, therefore, it did not appear to the Lords of the Treasury that the sum of £630 14s. 2d. should be provided for beyond the 5th of April, 1841, and that the compensation should be diminished after that date. It would, therefore, appear that a perpetual pension of £16,216 had been granted in respect of the loss of the annual sum of £11,300, and that a part of the former sum consisted of the annual sum of £630 14s. 2d. granted in respect of the loss of an annual sum of £10. The annual payment of this sum of £630 14s. 2d. had, however, been continued ever since 1841 without any legal authority and by what might be termed the quiet connivance of the Treasury. It was a monstrous thing that such an unjustifiable payment should continue. He also asked the House to take into consideration the payment of £800 per annum to the Duchy of Lancaster for "butlerage" and "prisage." Prisage was the right which the King had by ancient prescription of taking to his own use and at his own valuation as much of all merchandize belonging to merchant strangers out of every ship importing the same as he had occasion for. A perpetual pension in consideration of this "butlerage" and "prisage" had been granted to the Duke of Grafton. It had been sometimes said that the whole question of perpetual pensions was a small one, but if the whole amount which had been paid in respect of all the existing and the commuted perpetual pensions had been invested at compound interest the nation would not only have been able to pay off the National Debt, but would have had several hundreds of millions of money in hand. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) further found that an annual payment of £100 10s. 10d. had been commuted for the sum of £2,700. The original sum was the aggregate amount which suitors had to pay to their Earls on going to the County Courts in the time of Henry III. He would not, however, trouble the House further with perpetual pensions, but would proceed to other points raised in the Report. In coming to the general Pension List he (Mr. Bradlaugh) fully admitted that, in whichever way they dealt with the question, huge difficulties stared them in the face. He believed that Parliament had already on one or two occasions tried to deal with the subject but

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had failed, and he imagined there was no logical way out of the difficulty except one in which he did not think the House—not even his Radical friends—would hardly support him. This solution was in the direction of the view advocated by Joseph Hume, that no servant of the State ought to receive a pension for services rendered to the State unless he was injured in its service. Joseph Hume also held that the servant of the State ought to be compelled, by the ordinary consideration which impelled every human being struggling for existence, to provide by his own thrift and economy against a time when he could no longer work and when sickness came upon him. He submitted that the sum for pensions of nearly £7,000,000 sterling, which was constantly growing, despite commutations, would grow to such a degree that in hard times the House would find that it was one of the matters which would call forth the loudest denunciations of the people in their misery. He would mention some of the suggestions which had been made to deal with this question rather than venture to propose any special remedy of his own. Perhaps one of the ablest compositions on this subject was a Memorandum by Sir Robert Hamilton, to be found in the appendix of the Report of the Civil Service Commission. There was a point raised in that Memorandum which was often raised in conversation—namely, all the servants of the State were in a different position from ordinary *employés*, and ought, therefore, to be differently dealt with. But they did not superannuate or pension all servants on length of service or for sickness. There was an excellent class of public servants known as "temporary" Civil servants. Although most of them had been over 25 years, some of them 30 years in the Service, none of them were entitled to any kind of superannuation because they happened to be called "temporary" Civil servants. Sir Robert Hamilton said that superannuation could not be defended as a charitable institution, but it could be defended on the ground that it was a means of procuring cheaper service and keeping down the amount of the salaries. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) maintained, however, that the experience of the last 30 years showed that the statement was not true.—that the system of pensions kept

down salaries. Compared with the general service through the State he urged that they did not get such services cheaper; they often paid more for, and got less out of their servants than any other employer. The present system of pensions was demoralizing to the age, discouraged industry and thrift, and was an incentive to idleness. It was a condition of employment demoralizing to the employed. Being assured in their position, and with the knowledge that they would have a pension at a certain period, Civil servants were disposed to do as little work as they possibly could, especially some of those who filled the higher grades of Departments. With reference to the Army pensions he would only select one or two of the most remarkable instances which came to his notice lately. One was that of a gentleman who died last week in Westmoreland. He was held in such high respect in the neighbourhood that the local paper which announced his death appeared with mourning borders. The gentleman had filled the office of Clerk of the Peace, and, indeed, of almost everything official in the district where he lived. In addition to the emoluments he received from these offices, he had drawn a military half-pay for over 70 years. At 12 years of age he became an officer in the Army. In 1815 he started to join in the war, but the war ceased while he was in the course of his journey; and from 1815 to the day of his death last week this gentleman had drawn a military pension for services he had never rendered. What was the use of going through the farce of the House holding the purse strings of the nation, if it held them so lightly? There were a very large number of cases of this kind. The Civil Service Commission pointed out that in the re-organization of the Accountant General's Department of the Admiralty in 1877 the numbers of the staff were 259, costing £70,562. In 1881 the numbers were 245, and the cost £55,885; in 1885 the numbers were 267, and the cost £61,324, although pensions to the amount of £20,097 a-year and bonuses of £51,299 had been granted on re-organization that were supposed to reduce this kind of thing. He again asked the House what was the use of placing Estimates on the Table, criticizing them, and moving reductions of a few sums,

if this National burden was to go on constantly swelling? Those burdens were considered to press most severely on labour in this country; every pension reduced the purchasing power of the wage-earner's wages. As a further example of the abuse of pensions, he would remind the House that some time ago he put a Question to the Secretary of the Treasury with regard to a gentleman who was receiving a pension up to the age of 137 years, at least that was what the official records stated, and he, of course, relied on them. That gentleman came into his pension at the age of 68, and at the time he retired he was page to the Princess Charlotte of Wales. They could thus prove by a sum in arithmetic that the enjoyment of a pension beat Old Parr's Life Pills altogether as a means of prolonging human life. There would be no hardship in abolishing pensions in the Government Services. They were not paid in any merchant's office. There the *employés*, by means of life insurance, sick and provident societies and thrift, made provision for old age and incapacity; but by the system of pensions the moral obligations of a whole class of persons who came upon the bounty of the State were destroyed. He hoped the Government would not oppose the Motion. He had not ventured to commit them to the course they should adopt with reference to pensions generally; but he thought there must be enough material to warrant that a small and strong Committee should be appointed to endeavour to find the most reasonable way out of the difficulty. He would leave the question of perpetual pensions to the absolutely unanimous Report of the Committee on the subject. He asked hon. Members who had Notices of Motion on the Paper in regard to the employment of the unemployed to join with him in doing that which would render the condition of the employed better, and would lessen the burdens which fell upon all industry. The country looked to that reformed Parliament to do something like justice in that matter, without regard to politics. These should not be Party questions. There was one class of pensions for which he could find no defence, though he had tried—he meant those mentioned at pages 51 and 52 in the accounts for the year under the heading of political and diplomatic pensions. They seemed

to him to have less justification than any others. The noblemen and gentlemen mentioned in the pages to which he referred were, in the belief of the people, out of the need of such pensions. They seemed to rest on less justification than any others. He did not say that they had a right to go back on those pensions which had been already granted; but he asked the House to come to the decision, on the Report of some such Committee as he suggested, that they would not make their professions of economy unreal, but would make them practical, and that they would sweep their own doorsteps first. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. JENNINGS (Stockport), in seconding the Resolution, said, that the junior Member for Northampton had rendered good service for some years past in endeavouring to call the attention of the country to the abuses of the pension system. No doubt, there were many instances in which perpetual pensions were given for distinguished services in the Army and Navy; but in the majority of cases those pensions were such as the country ought never to have been saddled with. In some instances the money had not been paid, and was not even now paid to descendants of the persons to whom the pensions were originally granted, a pension having been bought and sold in the market more than once, and nobody was able to explain the reason for which it had been given. The case of the Penn pension was a scandalous and notorious one. William Penn never rendered any services to this country, and had no claim upon it; he was simply compensated by the State of Pennsylvania for any losses he had sustained. Yet down to 1884 £4,000 a-year was paid on account of that pension, and then, to complete the transaction, £107,000 was paid for its commutation. Thus close on £500,000 was wrung from the British taxpayer, and paid to persons who were not even descendants of the man to whom the pension was originally granted, and who himself never had any claim on the nation. That was one of the most extraordinary jobs to be found in the political history of the country. Again, many years ago, there was a Mr. Heneage, who held the office of Hereditary Grand Proclamator

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and Usher with a salary of £588 a-year. No doubt, the duties of the office were entirely visionary, though the salary was tolerably substantial. That case became so glaring that the post was abolished, but the salary was transmitted to the descendants of the Chief Proclamator. The claim was ultimately commuted for £15,852, the whole affair being from first to last nothing less than an outrage on the people of this country. As the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had stated, most of those pensions had been commuted; but, unfortunately, one of the most scandalous of the whole still remained on the list—that of the so-called Master of the Hawks. It was conferred 200 years ago on one of the sons of Nell Gwynne, for the ostensible purpose of supplying hawks, and pigeons to feed the hawks, and meat to feed the pigeons, and ever since then £1,000 a-year had been taken under these false pretences from the taxpayers for the purchase of hawks, pigeons, and meat. On his asking Sir Reginald Welby whether there was any prospect of the termination of that pension, the answer he received was that, so far as the Treasury was concerned, the money would have to be paid for ever. He ventured, however, to express a hope that the House would decide differently, and that the pension, which was a species of legalized blackmailing, would be summarily put an end to. If the House would kindly look at the Instructions given to the Committee on Perpetual Pensions, they would see that it was directed to inquire how far the present pensions should be continued, having due regard to the just claims of the present recipients and to economy in the Public Expenditure. Tested by those principles, he asked the House what right had the St. Alban's family to the continuance of that pension? There was no conceivable right, unless it was that the taxpayers had been defrauded to the amount of £225,000 in the past. That fact, however, hardly established a right to defraud them out of another £225,000 in the future, or to repeat the process as long as the British Empire lasted. They were told in the Committee upstairs more than once that if they interfered with the claims of individuals they would commit the sacrilegious crime of destroying vested

interests. They had heard a great deal in Committee and elsewhere about vested interests, and it struck him as a curious thing that it was always the vested interests of individuals that were referred to, and that the vested interests of the public never got even a passing notice. He would venture to suggest that in asking the House to abolish the St. Alban's pension without further form or ceremony, they were only asking it to follow a very important precedent set by a Committee of the House in 1838. That Committee recommended that six pensions should cease at a much earlier period than that for which they were originally granted, and that 14 other pensions should absolutely cease then and there, no more money being paid to the recipients of the pensions than was due on the date the Committee made their Report. It seemed to him that that was a precedent quite good enough to follow in the case of the monstrous pension to the Master of the Hawks. The whole system of perpetual pensions was a relic of the good old times, when the institutions of the country were supposed to be kept up for the benefit of a few privileged families, while the common people were expected to return humble thanks, morning, noon, and night, for the privilege of being allowed to toil for these superior beings. There were still many persons who seemed to think that this country was a sort of free warren in which Providence intended them and their descendants to multiply and grow fat. But that was a tradition which was bound to perish in a short space of time, and it would be a great step towards bringing it to a final end if the House voted the Resolution which had been moved by the hon. Member for Northampton. The second part of the Resolution suggested that the whole pension system of the country required revision. Of course, it must be admitted that there were many cases of persons who had served the State, or were serving it, who deserved pensions. Our soldiers, our sailors, postmen, and many others of that class fully deserve pensions, for the simple reason that they were underpaid during the greater part of their lives. But he maintained that clerks in Public Departments who received from £600 to £1,200 a-year for

work, if it could be called work, had no earthly claim to be supported by the State after their period of service was over. He would ask hon. Members to look over the Pension List and examine it carefully. It would be found that it was made up, not of persons who had been underpaid all their lives, but of persons who had been overpaid. Some appeared on the List because they had been used as Parliamentary tools and hacks; others because they had been useful in electioneering operations; and others because they were of no earthly use to anybody, and it had been found absolutely cheaper to pay them for doing nothing than to keep them muddling around Public Offices. On that point much evidence had been given before the Commission on the Civil Services now sitting. Mr. Collet, the Director of Naval Contracts, stated that the reorganization of his Department meant the pensioning off of a lot of incompetent men. It could be proved that the reorganization game, as played at the Admiralty, had burdened the country with hundreds of persons who were heavily pensioned for no other reason than that they were found so intolerably useless that it was desirable on any terms to get rid of them, or their places were wanted for the friends of newcomers into office. It would be seen, by an examination of the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), that in 1857 the reorganization of the Accountant General's Department alone cost £4,517 a-year in pensions; in 1869 another reorganization cost £8,400 a-year; and in 1878-9 a further reorganization cost £21,000 a-year in pensions and £52,000 in bonuses. Clerks who at that time were not more than 42 or 43 years of age received pensions of £328 a-year, and bonuses of £600 or £700. Another thing in connection with these pensions, which, he believed, was peculiar to this country, was that a man who received a very high salary in a Public Office was provided with a comfortable pension when he was bound to go out of office, which pension he received until he got another appointment, so that whether in or out of office the country took care of him. No matter what changes went on in the political world, he had a good salary or pension. There was one case, at least, at the present moment which was nothing

more or less than a public scandal. There was an amount of £1,200 a-year added to the Civil List on the recommendation of the Ministers of the day. The object for which that money was provided by a Resolution of that House in 1834 was that it should be annually given to those who by personal services to the Crown, by the performance of duties to the public, or by useful discoveries in science, or by their attainments in literature and the arts, had merited the gracious consideration of the Sovereign and the gratitude of the country. No one who was acquainted with the way in which these matters were managed in this country would be surprised to learn that literature, science, and art had seen very little indeed of this money. The pensions had generally gone to political friends of the Ministers of the day, or to someone who was already receiving pensions from another Department of the State, and literature, science, and art had been coolly kicked out-of-doors. It was very difficult to get together the instances in which these pensions of £1,200 a-year had been awarded. They were not published in any one Paper. They appeared in separate Papers, but were not brought together. He had been over these Papers, and he would venture to trouble the House with two or three specimens of the way in which the fund for the relief of necessitous persons had been applied. Joseph Haydn, the author of *The Dictionary of Dates*, who was living in great want and misery, was allotted a pension of £25 a-year in order to make his declining years more comfortable. The widow of Thomas Hood received £100 a-year, and the widow of Douglas Jerrold also received £100 a-year. Those were genuine pensions given to literary persons, or those who were nearest and dearest to them in the world. But let them compare with these the pension given to Prince Lucien Bonaparte, who received £250 a-year from the same fund, which was understood to be intended for the recognition chiefly of services connected with literature, science, and art. Another pension of £500 a-year was given to Lady Stratford de Redcliffe out of the same scanty fund, although her husband received enormous sums during his period of service to the State. Whether Lady Stratford de Red-

cliffe deserved a pension was one thing, but whether it should be taken from this scanty fund, while poor literary men and artists were allowed to starve, was another question which he would leave to the House. Surely there were other funds from which these extravagant pensions might be taken. The principle on which the pensions were awarded often baffled comprehension. Two years ago £100 a-year was awarded to Mr. Augustus Mongredien, while Mr. Jefferies, an author of great and singular merit, who had added very charming books to the literature of this country, was vainly seeking a pension, and was allowed to pass the remainder of his useful days in the utmost penury and want. Would any three Members of that House say that Mr. Mongredien deserved £100 a-year for anything which he had written? That pension was a specimen of the maladministration of the fund. The fund was small at the best, and it ought to be awarded by the Minister of the day with the utmost discretion, tact, and good feeling. He came next to pensions given to Civil servants. He had counted 406 persons who were comfortably pensioned off before they were 40 years of age, and 774 who were pensioned off when between 40 and 50 years of age, or 1,180 who received pensions before they had reached 50 years of age. Scarcely one of them, as far as he could ascertain from the records, deserved either a large salary or a pension. In 1851 a pension of £500 a-year was given to a man of 25 years of age. What service could he have rendered to the country to deserve such a pension as that? Another person of 25 years of age got £300 a-year, and a lad of 22 got a pension of £150 a-year. He contended that if there were any principle under which these persons were entitled either to pensions or compensation allowance, that principle ought to be abolished forthwith, and nothing should be paid to persons who had done nothing for the country. In the Foreign Office a chief clerk received a salary of £1,250 a-year—and from his observation of the world he should say that £1,250 a-year was a very fair salary for a chief clerk, and that there were many men who would do the work for half the money. This gentleman, however, received in addition £950 a-year in the shape of compensation for the abolition of certain

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imaginary agencies, so that he got altogether £2,200 a-year. Prince Bismarck got £1,500 a-year; but, no doubt, this Foreign Office clerk was worth more than Prince Bismarck, and they had been told that they must not compare anything German with anything English. Another clerk in the Foreign Office received a salary of £925 a-year for 29 years, and at the age 47 he was retired on a pension of £650. No one could say that this clerk had served an ungrateful country. In the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade it was found that 14 persons were not required, and they were quartered on the taxpayers at a cost of £3,135 a-year. If they had been employed by a private firm they would simply have received notice to go and there would have been an end of the matter. One of these persons after 14 years of easy service received a pension of £1,200 a-year. This was what was called managing the funds of the country in an economical and creditable manner. In 1859 several offices connected with the Order of the Bath were abolished. One of them was a "blanc Coursier Herald," whatever heraldic prodigy that may be, and he received £124 a-year for life. Admiral Seymour held three offices and received a different pension for each, in addition to his other emoluments, which were very considerable. The best thing that could happen to a man in the public employment was that his office should be abolished. It was true that he lost his appointment, but he retained, what he valued far more, the emolument, and whatever happened he was well taken care of for the rest of his life. He would ask hon. Members to look at a case, which would be found in the Appendix, on page 8, of a Consul who retired in 1852 and was supposed to be done with. Yet this gentleman had been receiving a pension of £600 a-year ever since, and he was at the mature age of 38 when this stroke of good luck overtook him in the entire abolition of his office. Then there was the Second Secretary at Constantinople, who retired at the age of 44 with a pension of £900 a-year. There was an extra chaplain, who had only served for two years, and had preached, perhaps, 100 sermons, more or less indifferent, during that period, and who was retired on a pension of £75 10s. for life, after having received his salary of £350

a-year for two years. He had now received £1,600, and the profits were still pouring in. Clearly, literature, science, and art were not in it with the chaplains. A third class interpreter in China was paid £528 a-year, and then retired exhausted at 32, after 11 years' service, with a pension of £146 a-year. Ill-health was the cause assigned for the retirement in 1875; but, as he was still alive, it was probable that the pension had re-invigorated him. Then there was the solicitor in the Office of Works, who received £1,800 a-year, and was pensioned off in 1868 at £1,200 a-year. They all knew that solicitors got the best of it in this world; but he thought that very few of them drew such a prize as that. The Legal Profession, as anyone would suppose, came well out of a scramble of this kind. There was the case of Sir T. B. Maule, Director of Public Prosecutions, who received a pension of £500 a-year for life after four years' service. He called that a monstrous abuse of the public money; and he believed the country, when the facts came to the knowledge of the taxpayers, would regard it as an outrage upon them. The Legal Visitors of Lunatics had a pension of £350 after seven years' service. That case was very remarkable, because the Comptroller and Auditor General had reported that the gentlemen in question was not entitled to compensation at all. Nevertheless, the money was given all the same. The Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy retired on a pension of £666 after six years' service. The payment of that money, also, was an outrage upon the public. He had dipped into the book, and had taken the cases at random from the Appendix. He did not search for them; but he had opened page after page of the book at random, and he thought he had given sufficient cases to show the necessity for a revision of the whole of the pension system. It might be contended that the pension system was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the efficiency of the Public Service; but other nations, quite as clever and as prosperous as we were, did not think so. The United States paid no pension to the President, or to the Cabinet, or to any person in Civil employ.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No.

MR. JENNINGS said, yes. Probably the right hon. Gentleman knew more about the United States than he did; but he ventured to inform the right hon. Gentleman that he was strictly accurate in his statement, and that there was no pension system in the United States, as the right hon. Gentleman would find out if he would institute such an inquiry into the matter as he (Mr. Jennings) had done. No doubt, large amounts of money had been paid of late years in the shape of pensions—an amount of money exceeding our own Pension List; but it was only for services rendered during the Civil War. [MR. MUNDELLA: Hoar, hear!] He was quite aware of the pensions spontaneously given to the soldiers, or their wives and children, who suffered in the Civil War; but that could have no sort of application to the point now before the House. There was no pension system whatever in the United States; but the people of that country had come to the conclusion that the wives and children of those who had lost their lives in maintaining the integrity of the country deserved some sort of reward. The United States, moreover, were in the singular position of having a Revenue much greater than they knew what to do with, and, therefore, they had decided that those who fought in the Civil War should have pensions for themselves, and for their wives and children when they were dead. That was the only instance of pensions being paid in the United States. And from the President down to the humblest Civil servant, no man received a pension of one penny. No one could suppose that the people of this country would go on much longer paying extraordinary high salaries accompanied by pensions. What he demanded was that we should either pay lower salaries with pensions, or the present rate of salaries without pensions. It had been suggested, and he thought it was a very reasonable suggestion, that 10 per cent should be deducted from all salaries, in order to form a pension fund, and that the Government should add 10 per cent to that. He believed that something of that sort would have to be done. He did not suppose that anyone, either in the House or out of it, could believe that in these days, when everything was being turned topsy-turvy, the people of this country

would be content to pay twice or thrice the fair market value of labour, and in the end be required to support in idleness the innumerable horde of Tite Barnacles who now infest the State. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"—(Mr. Bradlaugh.)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. C. HALL (Cambridgeshire, Cherterton) said, he did not propose to follow his hon. Friend in the interesting speech he had just delivered. He wished rather to refer to the first matter brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in moving his Resolution—namely, the annual payment by the Commissioners of the Treasury to the Duchy of Cornwall. There seemed to be some doubt and misapprehension on the part of the hon. Member for Northampton; but the matter was an exceedingly simple one, and it had been most clearly explained to the Select Committee by Sir Reginald Welby in his evidence. His (Mr. C. Hall's) only apology for addressing the House upon the matter now, was the desire he felt to correct a doubt which appeared to prevail in the mind of the hon. Member for Northampton; as a matter of fact the payment in question was not a pension at all. The facts were as follows: By an Act of Parliament, or, rather, under a Charter of Edward III., there were granted to the first Duke of Cornwall certain tin duties, post groats, and white rent. By the Charter they were made payable to the Duke of Cornwall, and it was expressly stated that they were never to be severed from, but were to be part and parcel of the possessions of the Duchy of Cornwall. In the first year of the reign of Her Majesty it was decided to abolish the tin duties, owing to the fact that tin was no longer converted into coin, and one of the first acts

of Her Majesty's Government was to decide that those duties should be abolished and a payment made in lieu thereof. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury were empowered to ascertain the average annual value of those duties during the last 10 years, after deducting the expenses of collection, and on that being ascertained the Commissioners were to pay out of the Consolidated Fund to Her Majesty — or whoever was then in possession of the Duchy of Cornwall—the average annual amount so ascertained, year by year. That was the way in which the matter stood then, and the amount was arrived at after careful consideration by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being. The amount then fixed had been correctly stated by the hon. Member for Northampton, and was ascertained to be on the post groats a sum of £620 per annum. The Lords Commissioners then issued a Treasury Minute stating that his late Majesty William IV. had announced his intention of not pressing for payment of this £620.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the words were that His Majesty expressed his intention of abolishing post groats, tin duties, and white rent from the 5th of April, 1841. It further stated that His Majesty was pleased to confirm that intention; and therefore that the Lords' Commissioners were of opinion that it was no longer necessary to provide for this sum of £620 beyond the 5th of April, and that the compensation would be terminated after this date.

MR. C. HALL said, he was quite aware of that, and was just going to read the Minute. The hon. Member, however, had saved him the trouble; but it had nothing to do with the argument. Any lawyer would hold that the Sovereign had no right whatever to surrender those duties beyond the time she was entitled to receive them herself. She could not surrender duties which belonged to any succeeding Duke of Cornwall, and directly there was a Duke of Cornwall—that was to say on the birth of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the surrender would cease to have effect. It was expressly enacted that Her Majesty should have no more power to surrender the money payable by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in lieu of the duties than she had to sur-

render the duties themselves. The fifth section of the Act, which the hon. Member seemed to have overlooked, expressly enacted that.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, if the hon. and learned Gentleman would read the section of the Act which abolished the duties altogether?

MR. C. HALL said, he would do so if the hon. Member desired; but it really had nothing to do with the question. Although the duties were abolished the Act went on to say that a payment was to be made instead of duties, and Her Majesty had no more power to surrender that payment than she had to surrender the duties before the Act passed. That disposed of the legal part of the question. He now came to the other part, on which the hon. Member for Northampton based his complaint. As a matter of fact, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, knowing the intention of William IV., and the expressed intention of Her Majesty, issued a Minute, which was in fact the *fons et origo mali* of the complaint of the hon. Member. That Minute stated that in future the sum of £620 would not be required to be paid. But shortly before the Prince of Wales was born, the officers of the Duchy pointed out to the Commissioners that Her Majesty had no power to surrender the rights of a future Duke of Cornwall. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, no doubt being well advised in the matter, came to the same conclusion, and upon the birth of the Duke of Cornwall directed the payment to be continued. He ventured to say that no other conclusion was possible.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that not only was there no evidence of that; but Sir Reginald Welby had stated in his evidence that there was no Minute of any kind after the year 1841.

MR. C. HALL said, the hon. Member was again a little premature. He was just going to state that there was no Minute to that effect; but there was a correspondence to that effect, of which evidence was given before the Select Committee. [Mr. BRADLAUGH: No.] If the hon. Member would exhibit a little more patience, he would find that he was stating the fact quite correctly. He wished, however, to point out an inaccuracy of the hon. Member. The hon. Member had stated that King William IV. announced his intention

not pressing for this payment, because it was only £10 a-year. There was no evidence whatever to support that. The lease for that sum was given to a gentleman who had been a distinguished officer in the Duchy, and at the expiration of the lease, King William would become entitled to the £620 a-year in the same way as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was now, and the sum had been paid ever since. He believed he had dealt with the matter before the House. The sole complaint of the hon. Member for Northampton was that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, when they received a communication from the Council of the Duchy, and determined that they must pay, having no alternative but to do so, forgot to issue a Minute recording the fact. This was no new matter. The hon. Member had called the attention of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when it was in power, to the matter; he had brought it before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), who conferred on the subject with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. He ventured to say that the subject had been most carefully sifted by the present and late Government, and the result was as had been stated. The payment had been made for over 40 years without dispute or opposition; but there was one fact which came out in evidence, and it was that when the Government for the time being considered the question of the allowance to be made to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his marriage, computations were made in which this amount of £620 a-year was taken into account as being part of the revenues of the Duchy, so that the country had not been the loser of one penny in this respect. He had thought it necessary to make these observations in order that the circumstances should be understood by the House. The hon. Member had, he ventured to say with all possible respect, discovered a mare's nest; and he regretted that he was so loth to admit the fact after the conclusive evidence given before the Select Committee.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand,

Mr. C. Hall

Westminster): I may, perhaps, follow the hon. and learned Gentleman, who has disposed of the two most important charges made in the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. But before I proceed to say anything on the question, let me at once admit that this is by no means a Party question. I have, therefore, no reason to complain of hon. Members on either side of the House, who endeavour to lessen the public burdens and to cure any defects which may have grown up in the past in the public administration. Both sides of the House and we ourselves on these Benches will cordially welcome any assistance which may tend to do justice to the public at large as well as to public servants. The hon. Member, in speaking of the subject of pensions, laid down the proposition that every Civil servant should make provision for himself. He was bound to admit that this principle was sound, and should be generally applied if possible. The justification for pensions can only be found in the public advantage and necessity. The question we have to consider is whether those who have accepted office and come into the enjoyment of pensions should be deprived of them. I apprehend that no one would desire that faith should be broken to anyone who is entitled as the result of past service to pensions or superannuations, or any payment out of the public funds. I agree that justice should be done without regard to Party partiality or interest. The hon. Member directed special attention to certain pensions paid out of the Consolidated Fund. It is not for me to defend these pensions. They have been established by Parliament, and must be presumed, therefore, to have been established on the ground of public policy. I can imagine that many pensioners have rendered great service in the past, and have arrived at high office and distinction by reason of their ability and devotion to the Public Service. I can imagine that these gentlemen, having been withdrawn from the ordinary occupations of life, have not had the opportunity of increasing their private fortune or providing for the vicissitudes of affairs. I state this because I have had occasion to consider whether it was fair or right that certain applications should be entertained; and I have come to the conclusion that probably none are of greater consideration

to the State than the men who have devoted themselves through a long life to the Public Service, having thereby deprived themselves of the opportunity of making a fortune adequate to their positions in life. The hon. Member is aware that a declaration is required from all public servants who accept pensions that they need such assistance to enable them to live in private life. The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) made a serious indictment against the action of our forefathers. We are not here to defend that action, but we are here to maintain public faith, and with a qualification that due regard should be had to the just claims of the recipients of pensions, I can have no objection to the Motion. My hon. Friend, in the course of his interesting speech, spoke of persons who have no earthly claim to pensions; of incompetent men who have been pensioned, of persons pensioned simply because places were wanted for newcomers, who were intolerably incompetent. I have probably as great a knowledge of what is called the organization of the public offices as any man in this House. I have had the experience of 20 or 30 years. I have some experience, also, of business in private life, and I have found cases in which employers have felt themselves bound to make some provision for men who, after having served them faithfully for 10, 15, or 20 years, or perhaps longer, have become gradually less capable and less competent for the work required of them; and under these circumstances, if there were no positive fault, their employers have felt it to their interest and advantage not to leave them absolutely without means. I am not urging anything which appears contrary to the public interest, nor do I desire to incur any charge which might be avoided with due regard to the public interest. How would you have the public served? Would you have them served by faithful servants who know that they have a certainty or by men who know that they may be used for a given time and then cast aside? I am aware from my own experience that one of the great reasons which induces competent men to enter the service of the State is the knowledge that they cannot be thrown aside, that they will make a career, and that not even the caprice of a superior officer can have the effect of determining that

career unless some grave fault is committed. Undoubtedly that security has some great disadvantages. It has the disadvantage of a superannuation charge and of the comparative independence which an officer may have with regard to those under whom he serves; but it has great advantages, inasmuch as it gives the officer himself a motive for giving all his energies and devoting himself entirely to the service of the State, because he knows that he will be cared for in the long run. Another argument by which pensions can be justified is that we take young men into the public service just at the age when they would otherwise be able by entering into some business or profession to make a position in life for themselves. The Government are fully prepared to go with the hon. Member for Northampton in a desire to effect economy and to examine into the system under which these pensions and superannuations are given. I am prepared to go as far as we can with the hon. Member, but do not let us take a step which would deprive the Public Service of the best servants. Do not let us sacrifice efficiency for the sake of a temporary economy. My hon. Friend behind me made the very important statement that there were no pensions in the United States Civil Service; I believe that statement to be entirely accurate, but if there is one subject which more than any other attracts attention in the United States, it is that very condition of the Civil Service. Until recently, at all events, a Civil servant in the United States was liable to dismissal on a change in the Presidency. Well, I cannot think that the Public Service gains by that system, and I believe it has been admitted by some of the best men in the United States that a Civil Service founded on something like our own system would be a great advantage to their country, and would leave the Civil Service out of the area of public politics. I have also to remind the House again of one fact in connection with the present serious charges for superannuations. It is that this subject has been under the consideration of the House of Commons repeatedly for the last 30 or 40 years. In 1857 an Act was passed which abolished the contributions made by public servants themselves to the Superannuation Fund, on the ground that the abolition was a

public advantage. The Resolution on which that Act was founded was carried in opposition to the Government of the day. [Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Lord Naas's Resolution.] The House of Commons at that time had the whole subject under consideration. I am not, however, by any means unwilling that the House of Commons should again review the conditions under which these allowances are made. I ask the House to assist the Government in a matter which is not a Party question at all, for I have no doubt that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are as anxious as I am myself that there should be economy and above all that there should be efficiency in the Public Service. I have, therefore, Sir, to suggest to the hon. Member for Northampton that in lieu of the words on the Paper he should move:—

"That in the opinion of this House steps should be forthwith taken to determine hereditary pensions and allowances with due regard to any just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public expenditure; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system."

If the hon. Gentleman will adopt these words the Government will cordially accept them, and we will endeavour, as far as in us lies, to give effect to them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he gladly assented to the proposed change, and he did so the more readily because the words suggested by the right hon. Gentleman were precisely the same as he had himself placed on the Order Book of the House when he first moved in the matter. He would ask the indulgence of the House to explain one statement of the Attorney General for the Duchy (Mr. C. Hall), whom he was afraid he had too often interrupted. There was no Correspondence whatever which showed that the Treasury had considered and decided on the continuance of the £630 14s. 2d. There was a protest by the Duchy, and nothing more. In the examination of Sir Reginald Welby before the Select Committee, Question 420, the Chairman asked—

"You assumed from that, in your former answer, that there was a subsequent decision of the Treasury, which might not be recorded upon the Minute Book, that the payment ought to be continued?"

Mr. W. H. Smith

Sir Reginald Welby answered—

"I have got no evidence to put before the Committee in confirmation of such an opinion. It is difficult for me to suppose that the payment would have been continued without some instruction. At the same time, I wish the Committee particularly to understand that I have got no evidence whatever to offer in support of this opinion."

This clearly showed the accuracy of the statement he had made to the House.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I am somewhat unwilling to interpose, but the question is one of great importance, and there are a few words which I think it is necessary for me to say about it in consequence of a portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), although with regard to the general tenour of that speech I thought it was a valuable addition to this debate. I am extremely glad that the Government have taken a prudent course in accepting the substance of this Motion, and I agree in thinking that the modification which the right hon. Gentleman has made in the terms of the Motion is in the nature of an improvement. I feel that the Government in accepting such a Motion have undertaken very considerable responsibility, for there is no question of promising to give consideration in the sense in which naturally and necessarily such promises are often made. It is quite evident, considering the vastness of the subject and the extent and divergence of its branches, the Government will have to consider, first, how far provision has already been made in the Commission already sitting as to some portion of the subject; and, secondly, what course should be taken to promote a practical handling or to promote a careful examination of other branches of the question. Undoubtedly I for one, and the Mover and Seconder of the Motion also, will expect that some practical course should be adopted. The question is perhaps a wider one than most Members of the House are aware of. While the attention is attracted by a great mass of figures which express the burden of the country in connection with the necessarily very large and extended Civil Service, there are many branches of the subject which require distinct and separate examination. I may now criticize that portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport in which he found

it necessary to refer in some detail to the delicate and difficult questions relating to the administration of the annual grant of £1,200 a-year at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury. In the first place let me say, having had the administration of it for 11 years, and having known something of its administration by others, I can venture to assure the hon. Member that he is under an entire misapprehension in supposing that the grant, so far as I know, has ever been distributed with reference to political considerations. I venture to state that with very great confidence. Undoubtedly a case did happen many years ago—nearly 50 years ago—on which grave criticism might be made from that point of view; but it is entirely out of date, and I will not revive it by mentioning names, though it is obvious that the reception that event met with became the best security against any similar abuse. The hon. Member also seemed to imagine that poverty was the main qualification for the receipt of these pensions. That, I think, is not the case. The terms are laid down with great care in an Act of Parliament of 1837. As I read the Act, and as it has always been read, distinction is the necessary element, and poverty, if it intervened at all, is a secondary element. It is an element which will not dispense with the element of distinction. There are pensions upon the Civil List of the Queen which are available for poverty, but that is not the case here. The £1,200 at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury must be distributed on the ground of distinguished service, though no doubt it would not be entirely decent to give or to accept such a grant in cases where a large income was enjoyed. I will now mention one or two cases to which the hon. Member referred, and for which I myself am responsible. I will only say with regard to these cases, and with regard to the Civil List generally, having been responsible for a long time for two of the most difficult and the nicest branches of the pension system—namely, the Civil List, pensions for distinguished merit, and pensions for distinguished service, that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to appear before a Committee and give an account of every single act I have performed in this respect. I was not surprised at the

observations of the hon. Member, and I make no complaint at all with regard to them. They were not conceived any more than is any Party speech in a Party spirit; they were observations perfectly fair for the hon. Member to make; but at the same time I cannot accept their justice. The hon. Member commented adversely on a pension of £250 granted when I was Prime Minister to Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte. I do not think poor mortals ought to be proud of anything they do, but if I were proud of any pension I ever gave it would be of that one, because it was a pension in every point of view most eminently excellent and requisite. It so happens that it was made the subject of pointed comment in this House at the time. I made a lengthened statement in answer, and I do not think I ever had the pleasure and satisfaction of sitting down after making a statement amid more universal cheering. Prince Lucien Bonaparte is a person who has rendered enormous service to literature at his own expense when he was a comparatively opulent man. But the ruin of the French Empire in 1870 entirely altered the position of Prince Lucien and wholly cut off his literary pursuits. He was not responsible for the French Empire or its ruin, but the circumstances made it desirable—and it was no dishonour to him—that he should receive an honourable notice of this kind. There was this additional reason for the pension. One of the rules—a very good one—which are generally observed in the distribution of this £1,200 is not to give to the popular branch of literature. The popular branch of literature pays itself; but the services of Prince Lucien Bonaparte, in connection with which he incurred a large expenditure, were in the department of philology, an extremely difficult subject, but one very necessary to be explored. At the same time it is one which addresses itself to a very competent but extremely narrow public; indeed any book published hardly ever pays its expenses. Prince Lucien was a naturalized subject of the Crown, and in every point of view he was one of the fittest, if not the fittest, recipient of this grant. The hon. Member also referred to a pension of £100 a-year to Mr. Mongredien. I cannot recollect if that pension was granted by me or not; but at least it was not a very

large one. The hon. Gentleman also dwelt upon a case in which I was responsible for granting a pension of £500 a-year—I admit a very large sum under this grant—to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. I am glad here to be able to illustrate what I have said to the effect that these grants were not made with reference to political predictions. This is seen by the fact that Prince Lucien Bonaparte voted against the Liberal candidate in the borough of Chelsea, where he has a house, while the distinguished nobleman, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was a well-known Conservative, who sat for between 30 and 40 years on the other side of this House, or of the House of Lords. Whether a pension of £500 could properly be given to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe is, I think, a matter which may well attract the notice, or even the animadversion, of the hon. Member, and I should be happy to lay fully before a Committee the considerations which influenced me in it. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, while he lived, enjoyed an income from a diplomatic pension, and there was no case for making any application on his account. But when he died that pension expired. He had never been a wealthy man. All his life he had devoted himself to the Public Service, and the services which he rendered in Constantinople were undoubtedly of the highest order. I admit that there may be differences of opinion as to these services—that is to say, as to the policy on which his acts were founded, and as to the justice of the sanguine expectations which he entertained in common with Lord Palmerston and some other able men as to the capacity of the Turkish Empire for what is sometimes called regeneration. Although I myself have never been a sanguine believer in the regeneration, there is no doubt whatever that many things were done in the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, when he was Ambassador in Turkey, which were of the nature of great and substantial reforms. If the hon. Member wishes to know the height to which Lord Stratford ascended as a diplomatist, and the place he occupied in the estimation of the great majority of people at that period, let him consult the history of Mr. Kinglake, and there he will find the great and eminent services rendered by Lord Stratford at

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Constantinople set out with a splendour I cannot rival. Lord Stratford, as I have said, was not a wealthy man, and I believe it is a well-known fact—there is no disgrace in it—that his private means and economies disappeared in consequence of the repudiation by the Turkish Empire of its debts. Believing in the Turk, and in Turkish regeneration, he had given that strongest of all evidence of his belief when he invested in their funds—and unquestionably it became a matter for consideration whether, so far as the public were concerned, Lady Stratford was to remain without provision. I believe that all the Members whom I address would, in the circumstances in which I then stood, have done just as I did with respect to the Motion before the House. I will not dilate upon the reasons which lead me to support it. They are very strong indeed. I have pointed to the fact that I do not think it possible that it can be treated as a mere abstract Motion. I consider it a Motion intended and likely to lead to practical results, and I thank the Government for having accepted it in that sense. And the evident intention of the Government is to give effect to the views of the mover of the Amendment, which was so ably seconded by the hon. Member opposite, and to place this matter upon a footing which shall be above Party considerations. In these circumstances I trust that in the few hours which this debate has occupied, a fair amount of public business has been transacted.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked leave to withdraw his original Amendment in order to bring it up in an amended form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system;"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*.)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Cheshire, N., Blackpool) said, as a member of the Civil Service Commission and as one greatly interested in the reform of the system of pensions in the Civil Service, he desired to say, in favour of the Committee, that the action of the Government in accepting the opinion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had materially assisted them in their labours. He was glad that the system of pensions should be made the subject of inquiry. The hon. Member for Northampton had adduced some evidence given before the Committee of which he (Sir Matthew White Ridley) was Chairman, to the effect that, whatever might be thought of the pension system, it was high time that it was inquired into, not only from the point of view of the expense to the Treasury, but also from the point of view of whether it did not conduce to the extent of the efficiency of the Public Service. He was not entitled on that occasion to express any particular opinion which he might entertain; but he did express his belief that there was one of his Colleagues on the Commission who did not feel the importance of the inquiry on which they were engaged, and who did not expect, before several weeks had elapsed, the Committee would be able to present their Report to the House. The reform suggested in the course of the debate would be, of course, of material assistance to the Committee, who had already taken evidence on the subject. Evidence had been taken since the Report had been laid; but he pointed out that the more the subject was gone into the more difficult it appeared to present a scheme which would have a chance of lasting several years; the great difficulty was that so many years must elapse before the scheme to be proposed could be put into operation. He, therefore, begged for the indulgence of the House. The Committee were not able to present their Report as quickly as many desired. He rejoiced that the Report they had been able to lay out had received what he conceived to be substantial approval, and trusted that before much more time had elapsed the Committee would be able to present a successful scheme to the House.

A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY (East Grinstead) said, he rose to

protest against the remarks made by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) with regard to a very distinguished gentleman—Sir J. B. Maule—whose pension of £500 the hon. Member had adverted to. Sir J. B. Maule had, for a great number of years, been a distinguished Member of the Party opposite; he had served on the Commission which inquired into the Jamaica outrages; he had served as an unpaid member of the Municipal Commission for four years, and, to his personal knowledge, declined the high position of Chief Justice of India, because he preferred to carry on his professional practice. Sir J. B. Maule had been likewise selected at a salary of £3,000 a-year to discharge the office of Public Prosecutor. The operation of that office had not been satisfactory; but he ventured to say that whatever failure there might have been it could not be laid on the shoulders of this gentleman. It had been thought desirable, in the interest of the Public Service, that the appointment should lapse, or rather be transferred to the Solicitor to the Treasury, who was made Director of Public Prosecutions. For the loss of his office, Sir J. B. Maule had received the very small pension of £500 per annum. As a political opponent of this gentleman, he felt bound to make these remarks in reply to the statement of the hon. Member for Stockport, and he regretted that some personal matters had been introduced into the discussion which had, in some degree, obscured the main question on which he thought there was no difference of opinion in that House.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system.

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH.—OBSERVATIONS.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, it would be in the recollection of the House that on the 15th of February, in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for South Salford (Mr.

more or less than a public scandal. There was an amount of £1,200 a-year added to the Civil List on the recommendation of the Ministers of the day. The object for which that money was provided by a Resolution of that House in 1834 was that it should be annually given to those who by personal services to the Crown, by the performance of duties to the public, or by useful discoveries in science, or by their attainments in literature and the arts, had merited the gracious consideration of the Sovereign and the gratitude of the country. No one who was acquainted with the way in which these matters were managed in this country would be surprised to learn that literature, science, and art had seen very little indeed of this money. The pensions had generally gone to political friends of the Ministers of the day, or to someone who was already receiving pensions from another Department of the State, and literature, science, and art had been coolly kicked out-of-doors. It was very difficult to get together the instances in which these pensions of £1,200 a-year had been awarded. They were not published in any one Paper. They appeared in separate Papers, but were not brought together. He had been over these Papers, and he would venture to trouble the House with two or three specimens of the way in which the fund for the relief of necessitous persons had been applied. Joseph Haydn, the author of *The Dictionary of Dates*, who was living in great want and misery, was allotted a pension of £25 a-year in order to make his declining years more comfortable. The widow of Thomas Hood received £100 a-year, and the widow of Douglas Jerrold also received £100 a-year. Those were genuine pensions given to literary persons, or those who were nearest and dearest to them in the world. But let them compare with these the pension given to Prince Lucien Bonaparte, who received £250 a-year from the same fund, which was understood to be intended for the recognition chiefly of services connected with literature, science, and art. Another pension of £500 a-year was given to Lady Stratford de Redcliffe out of the same scanty fund, although her husband received enormous sums during his period of service to the State. Whether Lady Stratford de Red-

cliffe deserved a pension was one thing, but whether it should be taken from this scanty fund, while poor literary men and artists were allowed to starve, was another question which he would leave to the House. Surely there were other funds from which these extravagant pensions might be taken. The principle on which the pensions were awarded often baffled comprehension. Two years ago £100 a-year was awarded to Mr. Augustus Mongredien, while Mr. Jefferies, an author of great and singular merit, who had added very charming books to the literature of this country, was vainly seeking a pension, and was allowed to pass the remainder of his useful days in the utmost penury and want. Would any three Members of that House say that Mr. Mongredien deserved £100 a-year for anything which he had written? That pension was a specimen of the maladministration of the fund. The fund was small at the best, and it ought to be awarded by the Minister of the day with the utmost discretion, tact, and good feeling. He came next to pensions given to Civil servants. He had counted 406 persons who were comfortably pensioned off before they were 40 years of age, and 774 who were pensioned off when between 40 and 50 years of age, or 1,180 who received pensions before they had reached 50 years of age. Scarcely one of them, as far as he could ascertain from the records, deserved either a large salary or a pension. In 1851 a pension of £500 a-year was given to a man of 25 years of age. What service could he have rendered to the country to deserve such a pension as that? Another person of 25 years of age got £300 a-year, and a lad of 22 got a pension of £150 a-year. He contended that if there were any principle under which these persons were entitled either to pensions or compensation allowance, that principle ought to be abolished forthwith, and nothing should be paid to persons who had done nothing for the country. In the Foreign Office a chief clerk received a salary of £1,250 a-year—and from his observation of the world he should say that £1,250 a-year was a very fair salary for a chief clerk, and that there were many men who would do the work for half the money. This gentleman, however, received in addition £950 a-year in the shape of compensation for the abolition of certain

Mr. Jennings

imaginary agencies, so that he got altogether £2,200 a-year. Prince Bismarck got £1,500 a-year; but, no doubt, this Foreign Office clerk was worth more than Prince Bismarck, and they had been told that they must not compare anything German with anything English. Another clerk in the Foreign Office received a salary of £925 a-year for 29 years, and at the age 47 he was retired on a pension of £650. No one could say that this clerk had served an ungrateful country. In the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade it was found that 14 persons were not required, and they were quartered on the taxpayers at a cost of £3,135 a-year. If they had been employed by a private firm they would simply have received notice to go and there would have been an end of the matter. One of these persons after 14 years of easy service received a pension of £1,200 a-year. This was what was called managing the funds of the country in an economical and creditable manner. In 1859 several offices connected with the Order of the Bath were abolished. One of them was a "blanc Coursier Herald," whatever heraldic prodigy that may be, and he received £124 a-year for life. Admiral Seymour held three offices and received a different pension for each, in addition to his other emoluments, which were very considerable. The best thing that could happen to a man in the public employment was that his office should be abolished. It was true that he lost his appointment, but he retained, what he valued far more, the emolument, and whatever happened he was well taken care of for the rest of his life. He would ask hon. Members to look at a case, which would be found in the Appendix, on page 8, of a Consul who retired in 1852 and was supposed to be done with. Yet this gentleman had been receiving a pension of £600 a-year ever since, and he was at the mature age of 38 when this stroke of good luck overtook him in the entire abolition of his office. Then there was the Second Secretary at Constantinople, who retired at the age of 44 with a pension of £900 a-year. There was an extra chaplain, who had only served for two years, and had preached, perhaps, 100 sermons, more or less indifferent, during that period, and who was retired on a pension of £75 10s. for life, after having received his salary of £350

a-year for two years. He had now received £1,600, and the profits were still pouring in. Clearly, literature, science, and art were not in it with the chaplains. A third class interpreter in China was paid £528 a-year, and then retired exhausted at 32, after 11 years' service, with a pension of £146 a-year. Ill-health was the cause assigned for the retirement in 1875; but, as he was still alive, it was probable that the pension had re-invigorated him. Then there was the solicitor in the Office of Works, who received £1,800 a-year, and was pensioned off in 1868 at £1,200 a-year. They all knew that solicitors got the best of it in this world; but he thought that very few of them drew such a prize as that. The Legal Profession, as anyone would suppose, came well out of a scramble of this kind. There was the case of Sir T. B. Maule, Director of Public Prosecutions, who received a pension of £500 a-year for life after four years' service. He called that a monstrous abuse of the public money; and he believed the country, when the facts came to the knowledge of the taxpayers, would regard it as an outrage upon them. The Legal Visitors of Lunatics had a pension of £350 after seven years' service. That case was very remarkable, because the Comptroller and Auditor General had reported that the gentlemen in question was not entitled to compensation at all. Nevertheless, the money was given all the same. The Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy retired on a pension of £666 after six years' service. The payment of that money, also, was an outrage upon the public. He had dipped into the book, and had taken the cases at random from the Appendix. He did not search for them; but he had opened page after page of the book at random, and he thought he had given sufficient cases to show the necessity for a revision of the whole of the pension system. It might be contended that the pension system was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the efficiency of the Public Service; but other nations, quite as clever and as prosperous as we were, did not think so. The United States paid no pension to the President, or to the Cabinet, or to any person in Civil employ.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No.



MR. JENNINGS said, yes. Probably the right hon. Gentleman knew more about the United States than he did; but he ventured to inform the right hon. Gentleman that he was strictly accurate in his statement, and that there was no pension system in the United States, as the right hon. Gentleman would find out if he would institute such an inquiry into the matter as he (Mr. Jennings) had done. No doubt, large amounts of money had been paid of late years in the shape of pensions—an amount of money exceeding our own Pension List; but it was only for services rendered during the Civil War. [MR. MUNDELLA: Hear, hear!] He was quite aware of the pensions spontaneously given to the soldiers, or their wives and children, who suffered in the Civil War; but that could have no sort of application to the point now before the House. There was no pension system whatever in the United States; but the people of that country had come to the conclusion that the wives and children of those who had lost their lives in maintaining the integrity of the country deserved some sort of reward. The United States, moreover, were in the singular position of having a Revenue much greater than they knew what to do with, and, therefore, they had decided that those who fought in the Civil War should have pensions for themselves, and for their wives and children when they were dead. That was the only instance of pensions being paid in the United States. And from the President down to the humblest Civil servant, no man received a pension of one penny. No one could suppose that the people of this country would go on much longer paying extraordinary high salaries accompanied by pensions. What he demanded was that we should either pay lower salaries with pensions, or the present rate of salaries without pensions. It had been suggested, and he thought it was a very reasonable suggestion, that 10 per cent should be deducted from all salaries, in order to form a pension fund, and that the Government should add 10 per cent to that. He believed that something of that sort would have to be done. He did not suppose that anyone, either in the House or out of it, could believe that in these days, when everything was being turned topsy-turvy, the people of this country

would be content to pay twice or thrice the fair market value of labour, and in the end be required to support in idleness the innumerable horde of Tite Barnacles who now infest the State. He begged to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to give effect to the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system,"—(Mr. Bradlaugh.)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. C. HALL (Cambridgeshire, Cherterton) said, he did not propose to follow his hon. Friend in the interesting speech he had just delivered. He wished rather to refer to the first matter brought forward by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) in moving his Resolution—namely, the annual payment by the Commissioners of the Treasury to the Duchy of Cornwall. There seemed to be some doubt and misapprehension on the part of the hon. Member for Northampton; but the matter was an exceedingly simple one, and it had been most clearly explained to the Select Committee by Sir Reginald Welby in his evidence. His (Mr. C. Hall's) only apology for addressing the House upon the matter now, was the desire he felt to correct a doubt which appeared to prevail in the mind of the hon. Member for Northampton; as a matter of fact the payment in question was not a pension at all. The facts were as follows: By an Act of Parliament, or, rather, under a Charter of Edward III., there were granted to the first Duke of Cornwall certain tin duties, post groats, and white rent. By the Charter they were made payable to the Duke of Cornwall, and it was expressly stated that they were never to be severed from, but were to be part and parcel of the possessions of the Duchy of Cornwall. In the first year of the reign of Her Majesty it was decided to abolish the tin duties, owing to the fact that tin was no longer converted into coin, and one of the first acts

of Her Majesty's Government was to decide that those duties should be abolished and a payment made in lieu thereof. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury were empowered to ascertain the average annual value of those duties during the last 10 years, after deducting the expenses of collection, and on that being ascertained the Commissioners were to pay out of the Consolidated Fund to Her Majesty — or whoever was then in possession of the Duchy of Cornwall—the average annual amount so ascertained, year by year. That was the way in which the matter stood then, and the amount was arrived at after careful consideration by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury for the time being. The amount then fixed had been correctly stated by the hon. Member for Northampton, and was ascertained to be on the post groats a sum of £620 per annum. The Lords Commissioners then issued a Treasury Minute stating that his late Majesty William IV. had announced his intention of not pressing for payment of this £620.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, the words were that His Majesty expressed his intention of abolishing post groats, tin duties, and white rent from the 5th of April, 1841. It further stated that His Majesty was pleased to confirm that intention; and therefore that the Lords' Commissioners were of opinion that it was no longer necessary to provide for this sum of £620 beyond the 5th of April, and that the compensation would be terminated after this date.

MR. C. HALL said, he was quite aware of that, and was just going to read the Minute. The hon. Member, however, had saved him the trouble; but it had nothing to do with the argument. Any lawyer would hold that the Sovereign had no right whatever to surrender those duties beyond the time she was entitled to receive them herself. She could not surrender duties which belonged to any succeeding Duke of Cornwall, and directly there was a Duke of Cornwall—that was to say on the birth of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the surrender would cease to have effect. It was expressly enacted that Her Majesty should have no more power to surrender the money payable by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in lieu of the duties than she had to sur-

render the duties themselves. The fifth section of the Act, which the hon. Member seemed to have overlooked, expressly enacted that.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, if the hon. and learned Gentleman would read the section of the Act which abolished the duties altogether?

MR. C. HALL said, he would do so if the hon. Member desired; but it really had nothing to do with the question. Although the duties were abolished the Act went on to say that a payment was to be made instead of duties, and Her Majesty had no more power to surrender that payment than she had to surrender the duties before the Act passed. That disposed of the legal part of the question. He now came to the other part, on which the hon. Member for Northampton based his complaint. As a matter of fact, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, knowing the intention of William IV., and the expressed intention of Her Majesty, issued a Minute, which was in fact the *sons et origo mali* of the complaint of the hon. Member. That Minute stated that in future the sum of £620 would not be required to be paid. But shortly before the Prince of Wales was born, the officers of the Duchy pointed out to the Commissioners that Her Majesty had no power to surrender the rights of a future Duke of Cornwall. The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, no doubt being well advised in the matter, came to the same conclusion, and upon the birth of the Duke of Cornwall directed the payment to be continued. He ventured to say that no other conclusion was possible.

MR. BRADLAUGH said, that not only was there no evidence of that; but Sir Reginald Welby had stated in his evidence that there was no Minute of any kind after the year 1841.

MR. C. HALL said, the hon. Member was again a little premature. He was just going to state that there was no Minute to that effect; but there was a correspondence to that effect, of which evidence was given before the Select Committee. [MR. BRADLAUGH: No.] If the hon. Member would exhibit a little more patience, he would find that he was stating the facts quite correctly. He wished, however, to point out an inaccuracy of the hon. Member. The hon. Member had stated that King William IV. announced his intention of

assing for this payment, because only £10 a-year. There was hence whatever to support that case for that sum was given to the hon. Member who had been a distinguished officer in the Duchy, and at the expiration of the lease, King William IV. became entitled to the £620 a-year in the same way as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was now, the sum had been paid ever since. I believed he had dealt with the matter before the House. The sole complaint of the hon. Member for Northampton was that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, when they received a communication from the Council of the Duchy, and determined that they must pay, having no alternative but to do so, forgot to issue a Minute recording the fact. This was no new matter. The hon. Member had called the attention of the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when it was in power, to the matter; he had brought it before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), who conferred on the subject with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. He ventured to say that the subject had been most carefully sifted by the present and late Government, and the result was as had been stated. The payment had been made for over 40 years without dispute or opposition; but there was one fact which came out in evidence, and it was that when the Government for the time being considered the question of the allowance to be made to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his marriage, computations were made in which this amount of £620 a-year was taken into account as being part of the revenues of the Duchy, so that the country had not been the loser of one penny in this respect. He had thought it necessary to make these observations in order that the circumstances should be understood by the House. The hon. Member had, he ventured to say with all possible respect, discovered a mare's nest; and he regretted that he was so loth to admit the fact after the conclusive evidence given before the Select Committee.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand,

Mr. C. Hall

Westminster): I may, perhaps, follow the hon. and learned Gentleman, who has disposed of the two most important charges made in the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. But before I proceed to say anything on the question let me at once admit that this is by no means a Party question. I have, therefore, no reason to complain of hon. Members on either side of the House who endeavour to lessen the public burdens and to cure any defects which may have grown up in the past in the public administration. Both sides of the House and we ourselves on these Benches will cordially welcome any assistance which may tend to do justice to the public at large as well as to public servants. The hon. Member, in speaking of the subject of pensions, laid down the proposition that every Civil servant should make provision for himself. He was bound to admit that this principle was sound, and should be generally applied if possible. The justification for pensions can only be found in the public advantage and necessity. The question we have to consider is whether those who have accepted office and come into the enjoyment of pensions should be deprived of them. I apprehend that no one would desire that faith should be broken to anyone who is entitled as the result of past service to pensions superannuations, or any payment out of the public funds. I agree that justice should be done without regard to Party partiality or interest. The hon. Member directed special attention to certain pensions paid out of the Consolidated Fund. It is not for me to defend these pensions. They have been established by Parliament, and must be presumed, therefore, to have been established on the ground of public policy. I can imagine many pensioners have rendered good service in the past, and have attained high office and distinction by reason of their ability and devotion to the Service. I can imagine that these men, having been withdrawn from ordinary occupations of life, had the opportunity of increasing their private fortune or providing against the vicissitudes of affairs. I state this because I have had occasion to consider whether it was fair or right that applications should be entertained. I have come to the conclusion that probably none are of greater

to the State than the men who have devoted themselves through a long life to the Public Service, having thereby deprived themselves of the opportunity of making a fortune adequate to their positions in life. The hon. Member is aware that a declaration is required from all public servants who accept pensions that they need such assistance to enable them to live in private life. The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) made a serious indictment against the action of our forefathers. We are not here to defend that action, but we are here to maintain public faith, and with a qualification that due regard should be had to the just claims of the recipients of pensions, I can have no objection to the Motion. My hon. Friend, in the course of his interesting speech, spoke of persons who have no earthly claim to pensions; of incompetent men who have been pensioned, of persons pensioned simply because places were wanted for newcomers, who were intolerably incompetent. I have probably as great a knowledge of what is called the organization of the public offices as any man in this House. I have had the experience of 20 or 30 years. I have some experience, also, of business in private life, and I have found cases in which employers have felt themselves bound to make some provision for men who, after having served them faithfully for 10, 15, or 20 years, or perhaps longer, have become gradually less capable and less competent for the work required of them; and under these circumstances, if there were no positive fault, their employers have felt it to their interest and advantage not to leave them absolutely without means. I am not urging anything which appears contrary to the public interest, nor do I desire to incur any charge which might be avoided with due regard to the public interest. How would you have the public served? Would you have them served by faithful servants who know that they have a certainty or by men who know that they may be used for a given time and then cast aside? I am aware from my own experience that one of the great reasons which induces competent men to enter the service of the State is the knowledge that they cannot be thrown aside, that they will make a career, and that not even the caprice of a superior officer can have the effect of determining that

career unless some grave fault is committed. Undoubtedly that security has some great disadvantages. It has the disadvantage of a superannuation charge and of the comparative independence which an officer may have with regard to those under whom he serves; but it has great advantages, inasmuch as it gives the officer himself a motive for giving all his energies and devoting himself entirely to the service of the State, because he knows that he will be cared for in the long run. Another argument by which pensions can be justified is that we take young men into the public service just at the age when they would otherwise be able by entering into some business or profession to make a position in life for themselves. The Government are fully prepared to go with the hon. Member for Northampton in a desire to effect economy and to examine into the system under which these pensions and superannuations are given. I am prepared to go as far as we can with the hon. Member, but do not let us take a step which would deprive the Public Service of the best servants. Do not let us sacrifice efficiency for the sake of a temporary economy. My hon. Friend behind me made the very important statement that there were no pensions in the United States Civil Service; I believe that statement to be entirely accurate, but if there is one subject which more than any other attracts attention in the United States, it is that very condition of the Civil Service. Until recently, at all events, a Civil servant in the United States was liable to dismissal on a change in the Presidency. Well, I cannot think that the Public Service gains by that system, and I believe it has been admitted by some of the best men in the United States that a Civil Service founded on something like our own system would be a great advantage to their country, and would leave the Civil Service out of the area of public politics. I have also to remind the House again of one fact in connection with the present serious charges for superannuations. It is that this subject has been under the consideration of the House of Commons repeatedly for the last 30 or 40 years. In 1857 an Act was passed which abolished the contributions made by public servants themselves to the Superannuation Fund, on the ground that the abolition was a

public advantage. The Resolution on which that Act was founded was carried in opposition to the Government of the day. [Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Lord Naas's Resolution.] The House of Commons at that time had the whole subject under consideration. I am not, however, by any means unwilling that the House of Commons should again review the conditions under which these allowances are made. I ask the House to assist the Government in a matter which is not a Party question at all, for I have no doubt that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are as anxious as I am myself that there should be economy and above all that there should be efficiency in the Public Service. I have, therefore, Sir, to suggest to the hon. Member for Northampton that in lieu of the words on the Paper he should move:—

"That in the opinion of this House steps should be forthwith taken to determine hereditary pensions and allowances with due regard to any just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public expenditure; and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system."

If the hon. Gentleman will adopt these words the Government will cordially accept them, and we will endeavour, as far as in us lies, to give effect to them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH said, he gladly assented to the proposed change, and he did so the more readily because the words suggested by the right hon. Gentleman were precisely the same as he had himself placed on the Order Book of the House when he first moved in the matter. He would ask the indulgence of the House to explain one statement of the Attorney General for the Duchy (Mr. C. Hall), whom he was afraid he had too often interrupted. There was no Correspondence whatever which showed that the Treasury had considered and decided on the continuance of the £630 14s. 2d. There was a protest by the Duchy, and nothing more. In the examination of Sir Reginald Welby before the Select Committee, Question 420, the Chairman asked—

"You assumed from that, in your former answer, that there was a subsequent decision of the Treasury, which might not be recorded upon the Minute Book, that the payment ought to be continued?"

Mr. W. H. Smith

Sir Reginald Welby answered—

"I have got no evidence to put before the Committee in confirmation of such an opinion. It is difficult for me to suppose that the payment would have been continued without some instruction. At the same time, I wish the Committee particularly to understand that I have got no evidence whatever to offer in support of this opinion."

This clearly showed the accuracy of the statement he had made to the House.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I am somewhat unwilling to interpose, but the question is one of great importance, and there are a few words which I think it is necessary for me to say about it in consequence of a portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), although with regard to the general tenour of that speech I thought it was a valuable addition to this debate. I am extremely glad that the Government have taken a prudent course in accepting the substance of this Motion, and I agree in thinking that the modification which the right hon. Gentleman has made in the terms of the Motion is in the nature of an improvement. I feel that the Government in accepting such a Motion have undertaken very considerable responsibility, for there is no question of promising to give consideration in the sense in which naturally and necessarily such promises are often made. It is quite evident, considering the vastness of the subject and the extent and divergence of its branches, the Government will have to consider, first, how far provision has already been made in the Commission already sitting as to some portion of the subject; and, secondly, what course should be taken to promote a practical handling or to promote a careful examination of other branches of the question. Undoubtedly I for one, and the Mover and Seconder of the Motion also, will expect that some practical course should be adopted. The question is perhaps a wider one than most Members of the House are aware of. While the attention is attracted by a great mass of figures which express the burden of the country in connection with the necessarily very large and extended Civil Service, there are many branches of the subject which require distinct and separate examination. I may now criticize that portion of the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport in which he found

it necessary to refer in some detail to the delicate and difficult questions relating to the administration of the annual grant of £1,200 a-year at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury. In the first place let me say, having had the administration of it for 11 years, and having known something of its administration by others, I can venture to assure the hon. Member that he is under an entire misapprehension in supposing that the grant, so far as I know, has ever been distributed with reference to political considerations. I venture to state that with very great confidence. Undoubtedly a case did happen many years ago—nearly 50 years ago—on which grave criticism might be made from that point of view; but it is entirely out of date, and I will not revive it by mentioning names, though it is obvious that the reception that event met with became the best security against any similar abuse. The hon. Member also seemed to imagine that poverty was the main qualification for the receipt of these pensions. That, I think, is not the case. The terms are laid down with great care in an Act of Parliament of 1837. As I read the Act, and as it has always been read, distinction is the necessary element, and poverty, if it intervened at all, is a secondary element. It is an element which will not dispense with the element of distinction. There are pensions upon the Civil List of the Queen which are available for poverty, but that is not the case here. The £1,200 at the disposal of the First Lord of the Treasury must be distributed on the ground of distinguished service, though no doubt it would not be entirely decent to give or to accept such a grant in cases where a large income was enjoyed. I will now mention one or two cases to which the hon. Member referred, and for which I myself am responsible. I will only say with regard to these cases, and with regard to the Civil List generally, having been responsible for a long time for two of the most difficult and the nicest branches of the pension system—namely, the Civil List, pensions for distinguished merit, and pensions for distinguished service, that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to appear before a Committee and give an account of every single act I have performed in this respect. I was not surprised at the

observations of the hon. Member, and I make no complaint at all with regard to them. They were not conceived any more than is any Party speech in a Party spirit; they were observations perfectly fair for the hon. Member to make; but at the same time I cannot accept their justice. The hon. Member commented adversely on a pension of £250 granted when I was Prime Minister to Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte. I do not think poor mortals ought to be proud of anything they do, but if I were proud of any pension I ever gave it would be of that one, because it was a pension in every point of view most eminently excellent and requisite. It so happens that it was made the subject of pointed comment in this House at the time. I made a lengthened statement in answer, and I do not think I ever had the pleasure and satisfaction of sitting down after making a statement amid more universal cheering. Prince Lucien Bonaparte is a person who has rendered enormous service to literature at his own expense when he was a comparatively opulent man. But the ruin of the French Empire in 1870 entirely altered the position of Prince Lucien and wholly cut off his literary pursuits. He was not responsible for the French Empire or its ruin, but the circumstances made it desirable—and it was no dishonour to him—that he should receive an honourable notice of this kind. There was this additional reason for the pension. One of the rules—a very good one—which are generally observed in the distribution of this £1,200 is not to give to the popular branch of literature. The popular branch of literature pays itself; but the services of Prince Lucien Bonaparte, in connection with which he incurred a large expenditure, were in the department of philology, an extremely difficult subject, but one very necessary to be explored. At the same time it is one which addresses itself to a very competent but extremely narrow public; indeed any book published hardly ever pays its expenses. Prince Lucien was a naturalized subject of the Crown, and in every point of view he was one of the fittest, if not the fittest, recipient of this grant. The hon. Member also referred to a pension of £100 a-year to Mr. Mongredien. I cannot recollect if that pension was granted by me or not; but at least it was not a very

large one. The hon. Gentleman also dwelt upon a case in which I was responsible for granting a pension of £500 a-year—I admit a very large sum under this grant—to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. I am glad here to be able to illustrate what I have said to the effect that these grants were not made with reference to political predictions. This is seen by the fact that Prince Lucien Bonaparte voted against the Liberal candidate in the borough of Chelsea, where he has a house, while the distinguished nobleman, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was a well-known Conservative, who sat for between 30 and 40 years on the other side of this House, or of the House of Lords. Whether a pension of £500 could properly be given to the widow of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe is, I think, a matter which may well attract the notice, or even the animadversion, of the hon. Member, and I should be happy to lay fully before a Committee the considerations which influenced me in it. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, while he lived, enjoyed an income from a diplomatic pension, and there was no case for making any application on his account. But when he died that pension expired. He had never been a wealthy man. All his life he had devoted himself to the Public Service, and the services which he rendered in Constantinople were undoubtedly of the highest order. I admit that there may be differences of opinion as to these services—that is to say, as to the policy on which his acts were founded, and as to the justice of the sanguine expectations which he entertained in common with Lord Palmerston and some other able men as to the capacity of the Turkish Empire for what is sometimes called regeneration. Although I myself have never been a sanguine believer in the regeneration, there is no doubt whatever that many things were done in the time of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, when he was Ambassador in Turkey, which were of the nature of great and substantial reforms. If the hon. Member wishes to know the height to which Lord Stratford ascended as a diplomatist, and the place he occupied in the estimation of the great majority of people at that period, let him consult the history of Mr. Kinglake, and there he will find the great and eminent services rendered by Lord Stratford at

Mr. W. E. Gladstone

Constantinople set out with a splendour I cannot rival. Lord Stratford, as I have said, was not a wealthy man, and I believe it is a well-known fact—there is no disgrace in it—that his private means and economies disappeared in consequence of the repudiation by the Turkish Empire of its debts. Believing in the Turk, and in Turkish regeneration, he had given that strongest of all evidence of his belief when he invested in their funds—and unquestionably it became a matter for consideration whether, so far as the public were concerned, Lady Stratford was to remain without provision. I believe that all the Members whom I address would, in the circumstances in which I then stood, have done just as I did with respect to the Motion before the House. I will not dilate upon the reasons which lead me to support it. They are very strong indeed. I have pointed to the fact that I do not think it possible that it can be treated as a mere abstract Motion. I consider it a Motion intended and likely to lead to practical results, and I thank the Government for having accepted it in that sense. And the evident intention of the Government is to give effect to the views of the mover of the Amendment, which was so ably seconded by the hon. Member opposite, and to place this matter upon a footing which shall be above Party considerations. In these circumstances I trust that in the few hours which this debate has occupied, a fair amount of public business has been transacted.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked leave to withdraw his original Amendment in order to bring it up in an amended form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system;"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*.)

Question proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool) said, as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, and as one greatly interested in the reform of the system of pensions in the Civil Service, he desired to say, in behalf of the Committee, that the action of the Government in accepting the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) had materially tended to assist them in their labours. He was glad that the system of pensions was to be made the subject of inquiry. The hon. Member for Northampton had quoted some evidence given before the Committee of which he (Sir Matthew White Ridley) was Chairman, to the effect that, whatever might be thought of the pension system, it was high time that it was inquired into, not only from the point of view of the expense to the country, but also from the point of view that it did not conduce to the extent intended to the efficiency of the Public Service. He was not entitled on that occasion to express any particular opinions which he might entertain; but he might express his belief that there was not one of his Colleagues on the Commission who did not feel the importance of the inquiry on which they were engaged, and who did not expect, before many weeks had elapsed, the Committee would be able to present their Report to the House. The reform suggested in the course of the debate would be, of course, of material assistance to the Committee, who had already taken evidence on the subject. Evidence had been taken since the Report had been issued; but he pointed out that the more the subject was gone into the more difficult it appeared to present a scheme which would have a chance of lasting for several years; the great difficulty being that so many years must elapse before the scheme to be proposed could come into operation. He, therefore, asked for the indulgence of the House if the Committee were not able to present their Report as quickly as many would desire. He rejoiced that the limited Report they had been able to present had received what he conceived to be substantial approval, and trusted that before much more time had elapsed the Committee would be able to present a successful scheme to the House.

MR. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he rose to

protest against the remarks made by the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) with regard to a very distinguished gentleman—Sir J. B. Maule—whose pension of £500 the hon. Member had adverted to. Sir J. B. Maule had, for a great number of years, been a distinguished Member of the Party opposite; he had served on the Commission which inquired into the Jamaica outrages; he had served as an unpaid member of the Municipal Commission for four years, and, to his personal knowledge, declined the high position of Chief Justice of India, because he preferred to carry on his professional practice. Sir J. B. Maule had been likewise selected at a salary of £3,000 a-year to discharge the office of Public Prosecutor. The operation of that office had not been satisfactory; but he ventured to say that whatever failure there might have been it could not be laid on the shoulders of this gentleman. It had been thought desirable, in the interest of the Public Service, that the appointment should lapse, or rather be transferred to the Solicitor to the Treasury, who was made Director of Public Prosecutions. For the loss of his office, Sir J. B. Maule had received the very small pension of £500 per annum. As a political opponent of this gentleman, he felt bound to make these remarks in reply to the statement of the hon. Member for Stockport, and he regretted that some personal matters had been introduced into the discussion which had, in some degree, obscured the main question on which he thought there was no difference of opinion in that House.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, steps should be forthwith taken to determine the hereditary pensions and allowances, with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients and to economy in the public service, and that, considering the large and increasing annual charge upon the Country for general pensions and non-effective services, it is desirable to adopt measures for the thorough revision of the entire pension system.

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH.—OBSERVATIONS.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, it would be in the recollection of the House that on the 15th of February, in answer to his hon. Friend the Member for South Salford (Mr.

Howorth), the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) stated the preponderance of marks in the Examinations at Woolwich was given for subjects which were of the most practical value to the majority of officers, and which were able to be least easily crammed. In this examination it was clear that the marks attached to scientific subjects were low, out of all proportion to their importance; for while no less than 11,000 marks might be obtained by candidates for languages alone, only 2,000 marks could be obtained for those subjects which went under the wide title of experimental science, the practical importance of which, with regard to the Army, was admitted by the War Office themselves. For on page 13 of the Regulations it will be seen that in the course which was compulsory on those who had entered the Academy, Science stood next to Mathematics, while it stood above Modern Languages. It was, therefore, clear that the War Department itself attached importance to the teaching of Science, although in the entrance examinations for Woolwich its value was practically ignored. So much, then, for the statement that the War Office in these examinations laid stress upon those subjects which were of practical importance to the majority of officers. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had gone on to say, in reply to the Question of his hon. Friend, that those subjects least easily crammed were included in the Examinations. That was an important statement, because the subject of Experimental Science was not easy or liable to be crammed. The result of former examinations showed that Science was offered less frequently than other subjects by successful candidates—that meant that the candidates did not find it pay to bring in Science and that it could not be easily crammed. Another important matter was the influence which the new Code of Regulations had on the great public schools of the country, from which a large number of candidates came. He said that in those schools, having regard to the disproportion of marks as between Science and languages, Science teaching would fail and gradually disappear because it would not pay. It seemed to him that, under the present system, young men

might be chosen who had not the slightest aptitude for the scientific work which at the present day was absolutely necessary in this the chief scientific arm of the Service. A young man might enter Woolwich now with purely linguistic acquirements; at any rate, a young man might pass who had those acquirements in addition to mathematical training; and he maintained that by the system at present in force it was impossible for the authorities who examined the candidates to choose those young men who showed a capacity for scientific training. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had also said that this question had been considered by a strong Committee. But was it strong in an educational or a military sense? He could not believe that a strong educational Committee could have framed the present rules, because they were full of faults. First, they led to the rejection of candidates best fitted for the work that had to be done. Then they offered, too, a high premium for modern languages, and thus ran the risk that young men would prefer to go abroad in order to acquire languages rather than stay at home and pass through the regular curriculum of our great public schools. Thirdly, the regulations were liable to act fatally on the general tendency of what it was now most desirable to encourage—scientific training in our schools. He trusted they might hear that the Secretary of State for War, with the frankness that distinguished him in his statements, would undertake that these regulations should be remodelled, so as to give Science its proper position in these preliminary examinations.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, he had listened to the statement of the hon. Member with all the interest which attached to his high authority on the subject. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that he would pay the greatest possible attention to the views which had been urged. He explained that the regulations allotting a number of marks to particular subjects on examination for the Royal Military College were made in 1884. At that time there had been a very careful investigation, and the number of marks awarded for Science was reduced. Representations were made to the Se-

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cretary of State for War at that time by various scientific authorities, and the result was that the number of marks allotted to Science was raised. Practically, that system was established by a general consensus of opinion, was recommended by upwards of 50 head-masters, and considered by the Civil Service Commissioners and other high authorities. That system had been tried in the Royal Military College since 1884, and it was curious that, although the hon. Member appeared to complain of the regulations, as far as any experience seemed to show, the War Office had only heard that the regulations with regard to the Royal Military College had worked exceedingly well since that date. There had been an investigation by a Committee, presided over by Lord Morley, and it recommended that the original intention should be carried out, and that the system of the Royal Military Academy should be assimilated to that in the Royal Military College. It was not, however, a matter thoroughly adapted for being brought before the House. He would be glad to meet the hon. Gentleman and others who might be interested in the subject in order to hear and discuss what considerations should be urged in order to induce him to modify the regulations and see what alterations should be made.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) said, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had met the case very fairly. The question was one of great public importance. Woolwich had given more impulse to the study of science in the public schools in the country than any other motive power. When the scheme of 1884 was brought forward for Sandhurst, it was modified owing to representations made in the House. But what had been the result? The result had been exceedingly disastrous to scientific education. Before 1884, 8 per cent of the candidates at Sandhurst took science subjects. Since then only 2 per cent had done so. In the collegiate education at Woolwich, Experimental Science had a greater position than modern languages, but, according to the system which they were now bringing forward, a lad might enter Woolwich as a candidate for a scientific service without scientific knowledge. The linguistic city of a man was a perfectly different thing from his scientific capacity; though he approved

of high marks for French and German, yet he thought they should take care that they did not, by their entrance examination, admit men who gave no evidence, by previous training, of scientific capacity. They were about to bring young men into a scientific institution without sifting them to see whether they had scientific knowledge or a scientific capacity. They might get 11,000 marks through languages, and it would only be possible for them to get 2,000 marks by experimental science. Therefore, all the schools of the country would go back to the old mode of preparing lads in languages, and would discontinue preparing them in sciences. He asked that the growing love of Science, which was important for the interests of this country, should not be extinguished. They had a scheme brought before them which would certainly prevent the colleges which were not giving so much attention to Experimental Science from going on with that work, because it would not pay. By the conference to which the Secretary of State for War had invited them, in order more fully to discuss that matter, he hoped to be able to convince the right hon. Gentleman, and to induce him to consent to a small change. They only wanted him to raise the 2,000 marks for science to 3,000 marks, and put it on the same footing as languages, French, German, and Latin, and they would then be content.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) said, there were many schools now engaged in preparing candidates for Woolwich, the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and other Institutions; and it was, of course, the desire of the masters as well as of the boys in such schools to prepare for those subjects which commanded the most marks. He was, therefore, correct in saying that the education given was really in a great measure dependent on the number of marks allotted to each subject at the examinations. That being so, it was very desirable not only that the marks should be properly regulated as between the different subjects, including, of course, modern languages and science, but that there should be a system thoroughly considered and organized, and recognized as a durable system; because it had been a great evil in the past that constant changes had been

made, sometimes backwards and forwards, and the systems were not of a more permanent character. He had considerable experience, and took a great interest in the matter, having himself been at Woolwich, having passed five sons through the Royal Military Academy, and hoping to pass a sixth; and he felt that it was a great evil that changes were being constantly made in the system of examinations. Every boy intended for a Woolwich military career had to spend four or five years in preparatory studies, at great labour and expense, and he thought it a great hardship that a boy should find that the number of marks allotted to the different subjects had been altogether altered at the end of his preparatory course, and that, consequently, a great part of his time and money had been more or less wasted. He was, therefore, glad that his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War had invited the scientific Gentlemen opposite to confer with him, and he hoped that an arrangement would be made of a more durable as well as of a more satisfactory character than those which had obtained in the past.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENT — PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—SEATS IN THIS HOUSE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden), in rising to move a Resolution,

"That a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked 'Committee,' which shall be delivered to such Member on his application ;"

said, he thought he should best consult the wishes of hon. Members and the despatch of the Business of the House if he spoke as concisely and briefly as possible. The object of the change which the Amendment implied was, as hon. Members would see, the further convenience and comfort of the Members serving on Select Committees or Private Bill Committees. The change he proposed would even do more than

promote the comfort of hon. Gentlemen serving on Committees—it would materially affect and advance the pecuniary interests of the public. If the House of Commons was constructed in the same way as most of the Houses of Legislature of the world were constructed there would be no necessity for the Amendment which stood in his name, because there would be reserved in the House a seat or locality for each Member. But the wisdom of their predecessors had decreed that on the floor of the House there should not be space for more than 100 out of the 670 Members, and what the wisdom of their predecessors had decreed the matured common sense of the present generation saw no way of getting out of. And so it came about that any Member who was desirous of obtaining a place in the House from which to speak or listen to a debate was obliged to come down one, two, or three hours before the House met—possibly at great personal inconvenience—place his hat on a seat, be present at Prayers, and affix a card on the back of the seat. If a Member serving on a Private Bill Committee wished to obtain a seat in the House on any day on which that Committee was sitting, it would be necessary in future that the Committee should adjourn in order that he might be present at Prayers. This sometimes happened under the old *régime*; but under the new Rule, providing that Committees were not to rise when the House met, it would be always necessary, supposing the Members wished to retain seats in the House, for the Committee to adjourn, and for the Members to come down to the House. The proceedings of the Committee would thereby be stopped, and, as a consequence, the suitors would be put to very large expense. His Amendment provided that a Member of a Committee, when he came down to the House, should be able to obtain a different card from that at present in use, affix it to his seat, and thus ensure for himself a seat. It would not be necessary for him to be present at Prayers. Hon. Members would see he suggested that the cards to be used by such Members should be of a different colour to those ordinarily used. He hoped no one would suspect for a moment that he made this suggestion because he imagined that any hon. Member of the

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House would so far let his personal convenience, or his desire to hear the eloquence of the House, overcome his natural respect for the Rules of the House as to make use of the provision he (Mr. H. Gardner) proposed. It was, however, desirable there should not be any ground for a shadow of suspicion, and that was the reason why the use of cards of a different colour should be used. He stated at the outset that one of the objects of the Amendment was the pecuniary advantage of the public at large. As the House was aware, suitors before Committees often employed very eminent counsel, and it was a peculiarity of learned gentlemen that when they were eminent they were also very expensive. To suitors before Committees, therefore, time was essentially money. A friend of his, formerly a Member of the House, told him that he calculated that the adjournment of a Committee for an hour had cost the suitors £100. It must be obvious to the House that the adjournments necessary, unless some such Amendment as he proposed were adopted, would cost suitors a considerable sum of money. Under these circumstances, and having very great trust from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) the other day that the Government would accept it, he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked 'Committee,' which shall be delivered to such Member on his application."—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had endeavoured, so far as he could, to gather the general feeling of hon. Members of the House upon the question which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. Gardner), and he had arrived at the conclusion that the Members generally desired that some such provision as that which the hon. Member had suggested should be

adopted. Therefore, without at all going into the question, even at the length the hon. Gentleman had, he suggested it would be desirable that the House should adopt an Order of this character upon the understanding that the cards should be delivered to the Members of the Committees who desired to have them by the Committee clerks. It was obviously necessary that the cards should be in the custody of persons on whom absolute reliance could be placed.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, the words of the Motion were "a Member serving on a Select Committee." Would those words include Members serving on what were generally called Grand Committees?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was hardly able to say whether that would be the case or not. It must be remembered, however, that the hon. Gentlemen serving on Grand Committees would probably be 80 in number; that they would be able to come in from the Committee Room, take their seats, and go away then. Such Members were not required to be in as constant attendance as the Members of Select Committees or Private Bill Committees. A Member might leave without exposing himself, or anyone else, to inconvenience—at any rate, without causing any expense to the parties before them. Perhaps it would be well they should have some experience of the working of the Rule as applied to Members serving on Select Committees or Private Bill Committees before applying it to Members of the Grand Committees.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words *added*.

Resolved, That a Member serving on a Select Committee shall be entitled, without being present at Prayers, on any day on which such Committee shall sit, to retain a seat in the House by affixing thereto a card, distinguished by colour and marked "Committee," which shall be delivered to such Member on his application.

SUPPLY — Committee upon *Monday* next.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Jackson.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that, as his remarks on a former occasion were necessarily short, owing to the hour of the night when the debate was initiated, he would now explain a little more fully what the Bill sought to effect. The Bill had been prepared in order to insure the safety of the Abbey, which would, he was sure, be regarded by all hon. Members, whether belonging to the Church of England or not, as a great public monument which they were bound to preserve. It was at the present moment in a very grave condition. It was estimated when arrangements were made by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster in 1868 that £20,000 would then be sufficient for the work of repairing the building. Recently, however, it had been found that the repair of the fabric would now necessitate an expenditure of nearly £60,000; and the funds in the hands of the Dean and Chapter were wholly inadequate to meet that charge. The Dean and Chapter had been for a considerable period in entire ignorance of the serious condition of the Abbey, owing to the fact that the dilapidations were in portions of the building which were inaccessible. In 1886 an advance of £10,000 from the funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was authorized by a Bill passed by the late Government, and that advance was made a charge on the funds of Westminster Abbey, if they were capable of discharging it. It was therefore sought in the present Bill to relieve the Abbey funds from the payment of that amount. It would be impossible for the Dean and Chapter to meet such a charge as £66,000, even if it was spread over a long period of years. The funds of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which had suffered very much from the agricultural depression, did not enable them to make the necessary grant. It was, therefore, proposed by the Bill that the Dean and Chapter should be at liberty to surrender their estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who should have authority to grant to them an annual income equal to that which in 1868 it was estimated those estates would yield. There had been great depreciation in the value of

property in some parts of the kingdom, notably in the land belonging to the Dean and Chapter. The proposal, therefore, of the Bill was to give the Dean and Chapter that same amount of security in regard to their income which it was intended they should receive in 1868. It was not proposed to relieve them of the responsibility which attached to them out of that income to maintain the fabric, but it was intended that the funds which would be provided by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should be recovered from the Dean and Chapter, as they were able to pay the amount. Under this Bill considerable economies would be effected in the establishment of the Abbey, which would secure a sufficient income to meet the large charges which would be involved in repaying the capital sum required for the restoration of the Abbey. The Bill provided that on the next avoidance of a canonry other than those which attached to the parishes of St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, the appointment should be suspended so long as it might be necessary to do so, and also authorized the Dean and Chapter to submit new Statutes which would effect considerable economy in the establishment of the Abbey, and would provide sufficient income to meet the charges on the capital sum advanced. The sole object of this Bill was to make provision for the maintenance of the Abbey; there was no intention to carry out any structural alterations, or to effect any architectural changes in the building, but merely to maintain and to restore the fabric to the condition in which it had been handed down by our predecessors. He hoped that this short explanation would be considered satisfactory and that the House would agree to pass the second reading of the Bill, which he believed to be essential for the preservation of one of those national monuments to which was attached much that was interesting in the history of England, and which Englishmen would regret to see falling into decay. He desired to repeat that no charge whatever would be thrown on the national finances by this Bill, and that it dealt entirely with ecclesiastical funds.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, he desired to say that the interesting statement the First Lord of the Treasury had given them,

showed that the hon. Member for Swansea Town (Mr. Dillwyn) was amply justified in the action he took the other evening in protesting against such a Bill being read a second time without a word of explanation from the Treasury Bench. He was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman's definition of the word "restoration," and he assured the right hon. Gentleman that no one was more ready than hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House to support a measure for the preservation of a great historical monument like that of Westminster Abbey.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) said, that by the Bill they were asked to apportion funds between the maintenance of the fabric and the stipends of the Dean and Chapter and other ecclesiastics. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) would say what connection there was between the restoration of Westminster Abbey and the stipends in question. It appeared to him that this Bill was introduced for the purpose of enabling certain parties to have a claim to compensation at the time of the Disestablishment of the Church. They now found that ecclesiastical situations were made for temporary purposes, but that, finally, they became permanent. The office bearers became holdfasts, and would assuredly claim compensation. This was only a species of public plunder. [*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*] Of course it was, because the money for these repairs would be provided out of the funds of the nation at large. He should like to see the fabric of Westminster Abbey maintained. The Abbey had been diverted from its original purpose, but still he supposed it was a national monument. If the Government could show him there was anything between a national monument of this kind and the distribution of funds to Dean and Chapters, and so forth, officials already highly paid—and amongst whom a large amount was distributed only last year—he should raise no objection to the Bill. It seemed to him most extraordinary that those men should be tacked on to the Bill. The payment of stipends could have nothing to do with masonry. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said that no taxation would be used for the purposes of the

Bill; but last year between £60,000 and £70,000, raised by taxation, was spent upon Westminster Abbey. If that money had been properly used there would have been no need for the expenditure now proposed. If the authorities chose to turn the Abbey into a theatre and then turn it back again into a church, that was their business; but why the Dean and Chapter and other officials should have stipends provided for them by this Bill he could not understand. He regretted he should have had to interfere in this matter. He only did so because he saw that the proposition contained in the Bill was not honest. If the Government wanted to distribute money amongst already overpaid Churchmen, who had large churches and no flocks worth speaking of, it would be well they should bring in a separate Bill for the purpose.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, he joined in the regret the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Armagh (Mr. Blane) had just expressed, that he should have interfered in the discussion, because it was quite clear the hon. Member had not read the Bill. The fact was, that the Bill proposed to deal with the property of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, and it created for the first time a fabric fund—[*Cries of "No, no!"*] He (Sir John R. Mowbray) spoke with knowledge of the Bill. At present, the first charge on the revenues was the salary of the Dean and of minor officers, and, so far from giving them any increased claim on the revenues, it gave them a decreased claim. It made the maintenance of the fabric the first charge. If the hon. Gentleman had read the Bill, he could not have made the remarks he had addressed to the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATES (PENSIONS) BILL.—[BILL 92.]

(*Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Godson, Mr. Hastings*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Richard Temple.*)

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.), in moving the adjournment of the debate, said the hon. Baronet could never have expected to bring the Bill in to-day, and, perhaps, it was as well that they should have the Easter Recess in which to consider the provisions of the Bill.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half past
Seven o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 26th March, 1888.

Their Lordships met;—And having gone through the Business on the Paper without debate,

House adjourned at Two o'clock, till
To-morrow, Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 26th March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Pilotage, *nominated*; Private Bill Legislation, *nominated*; Revenue Departments Estimates, *nominated*; Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply), *nominated*.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission), *debate adjourned*.

Ordered—*First Reading*—Customs (Isle of Man) * [195].

First Reading—Pharmacy Acts Amendment * [196].

Second Reading—Bail (Scotland) * [172]; County Courts Consolidation * [173]; Glebe Lands * [180]; Metropolitan Board of Works Commission * [191]; Factory and Workshops Act (1878) Amendment * [154].

Committee—*Report*—*Third Reading*—Westminster Abbey * [165], and *passed*.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Commons (Farnborough) * [192]; Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray) * [193]; Metropolitan (Whitechapel and Limehouse) * [194].

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN).

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter

relating to the Imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Athlone on Circuit,
March 23, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour, as is my duty, to inform you, that Mr. Patrick O'Brien, a Member of the Honourable The House of Commons, was this day sentenced by me, to be imprisoned for four months as a first-class misdemeanant, upon the hearing of an appeal from a Court of Summary Jurisdiction constituted under the Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act of 1887.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM O'CONNOR MORRIS,
County Court Judge and Chairman
of Quarter Sessions,

QUESTIONS.

REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can now state when the Bills relating to Reformatories and Industrial Schools will be introduced?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E): I hope that these Bills may be introduced shortly after Easter. Their production has been considerably delayed, owing to the great pressure of work in the office of the Parliamentary draftsman.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE FINANCIAL PROPOSALS.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) (for Sir RICHARD PAGET) (Somerset, Wells) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could conveniently present to the House, previous to the Easter Recess, a Memorandum, showing, in statistical form, the financial proposals made by him in introducing the Local Government Bill?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, a Statement had been prepared, and he hoped would be distributed to-morrow along with the Bill.

THE ALASKAN FISHERIES DISPUTES—
THE SEAL FISHERIES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is correct, as reported by cable from Victoria, British Columbia, that a number of Canadian sealing schooners have been permitted to clear for Behring's Sea with the intention of prosecuting seal fishing, contrary to the Regulations of the United States Alaskan Authorities, carrying large Indian crews for the purpose of waging war upon American Revenue Cutters, should their Commanders attempt to molest them; and, what measures Her Majesty's Government intend adopting for the purpose of arriving at an amicable solution of the Alaskan Fisheries disputes?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Governor General of Canada has stated, in reply to a telegraphic inquiry, that the rumour referred to by the hon. Member is not confirmed by any information, private or official, in possession of the Dominion Government, and is not credited by them. The question of a settlement of the Alaskan Fisheries disputes is now under the consideration of the two Governments concerned; but it would be premature at this moment to say more than that Her Majesty's Government have no reason to doubt that a satisfactory arrangement will be arrived at.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — NEW SCHOOL, CASTLEMARTYR, CO. CORK.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) (for Mr. LANE) (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government prevent the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland from carrying out their arrangement to make a grant towards building a new school in Castlemartyr, County Cork, as intimated in a letter (dated 8th March, 1888) from the Secretary to the Commissioners to the Rev. T. O'Connell, P.P.?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I understand that this

case is one of several which the Commissioners of National Education have been unable to deal with in consequence of the funds applicable for payment of building grants for schools being exhausted. Such strong opinions were expressed in this House on the subject of these grants in connection with the recent Supplementary Estimate for them that Government felt bound to take the most imperative action to guard against further excesses. No doubt the case in which the hon. Member is interested will be taken up in its turn by the Commissioners when further funds are available.

MR. DEASY: Might I ask when the funds are likely to be available?

MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot answer that question, because I do not know the order in which this particular case stands, and it would, therefore, be impossible for me to say when this particular case will be dealt with. But I may state to the hon. Member that pretty large provision has been made for the present year, and we hope that within a reasonable time the grants which have been made in excess of the provision already made by Parliament will be exhausted in due course.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND)—RETIREMENTS ON PENSIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to the insertion of a clause in the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill, providing for the voluntary retirement, on suitable pensions, of officers and clerks of the Probate and Matrimonial Division of the High Court of Justice, whose duties shall be changed, or on whom new duties shall be imposed, in the event of the Bill becoming Law?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): The Government will not oppose the insertion of a clause in the Bill affording to the officers of the Probate and Matrimonial Division protection against the imposition of new duties similar to that contained in the 7th clause of the Bill with regard to officers attached to the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court.

LAU AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) CORK WINTER ASSIZES—REFUSAL OF EX- PENSES.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Has his attention been called to the letter in *The Freeman's Journal* of March 6, of Mrs. J. Hallinan, complaining that although herself and four Crown witnesses were served by Sergeant Murphy with subpoenas in Limerick to attend Cork Winter Assizes, where they were detained 10 days, the Crown Solicitor refused them any expenses, or to pay their train fare back to Limerick; and, if witnesses brought up by the Crown summons are not paid when their examination becomes unnecessary by a plea of guilty in the case?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): My attention has been called to the letter of Mrs. Hallinan by the Question of the hon. and learned Member, and the facts are as follow:—The trial (which was for riot and obstructing and assaulting the Sheriff) was first tried at the Summer Assizes in Limerick. No witnesses were examined on behalf of the prisoners, and the jury disagreed. The witnesses referred to were summoned for the second trial at the Winter Assizes in Cork; but not on behalf of the prosecution. They were served with Crown summonses to give evidence on behalf of the accused, obtained in the usual manner at the request of the prisoner. A statement having been made that no funds were available for bringing the witnesses to Cork, the Crown Solicitor caused their train fares to be paid. They were not detained by the Crown for any period. At the trial the accused pleaded guilty; and although they had been informed by notice that the Court would have power to order payment of the expenses of any *bona fide* witnesses for the defence no application was made to the Court for payment of the expenses in question. The prisoners were represented by counsel and solicitor. Under these circumstances, the refusal to pay the expenses of the witnesses was fully justified.

THE MAGISTRACY—CARDIFF MA- GISTRATES—BOGUS CLUBS.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the

Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that in the case of certain appeals from the decision of the Cardiff Stipendiary and other Borough Police Magistrates, with reference to Bogus Clubs, it had been reversed by five Glamorganshire County Magistrates at the last Quarter Sessions, who, while allowing the appeals with costs, threw the onus of proof of *bona fides* upon the prosecution contrary to to law, notwithstanding a decision of the Queen's Bench Division to the contrary, and refused to state a case for the opinion of the Court, either upon the point of law raised, or find as a fact, and refuse to state whether they found the Clubs in question were *bond fide* or not *bond fide*; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into all the circumstances of the case?

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I wish to ask whether his attention has been called to the great increase in the number of Bogus Clubs for the sale of intoxicating liquors in Cardiff, and to the consequent increase of disorder and drunkenness?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Immediately I received Notice of this Question from the hon. Member (Mr. Thomas) I communicated with the Chairman of Quarter Sessions at Cardiff, and I have not yet received any reply from him. I have heard that the number of these Bogus Clubs has increased; but as my information is not very definite, I cannot say to what extent.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Has the right hon. Gentleman any information to the effect that recently these Clubs are being rapidly rooted out of Cardiff?

MR. MATTHEWS: No Sir; I have not heard.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—STATISTICS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, When the Returns of Judicial Rents for November, December, January, and February last will be distributed; and, why it is not possible to bring the presentation of these Returns more closely up to date?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin

University): The Return of Judicial Rents for the months of November and December was presented on February 22. As regards the Return dealing with the months of January and February, the Land Commissioners inform me that it is in the printers' hands and will shortly be ready for presentation. These Returns are made up every two months for Departmental convenience, and they are thereupon presented as soon as possible.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—NOTICES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, What was the number of Notices under Section 7 of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," issued between 1st January and 17th March, 1887?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University): It has been arranged to present quarterly a Return of the Notices filed under Section 7 of the Land Act of last Session. The Return for the quarter ending the 31st day of this month will be presented as soon as possible. It would be inconvenient to obtain a Return for the broken period up to the 17th March; and I think that the hon. Member will find that his requirements are met by the presentation of the quarterly Return.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—ASSISTANTS OF EXCISE.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it has been called to his attention that the flow of promotion from assistants of Excise to second class officers has been materially checked, and that it now takes from seven and a-half to 10 years instead of five years, as estimated by the Secretary to the Treasury on the 12th of April, 1886; and that, at the present time, out of a total of 775 assistants of Excise no fewer than 450 have already served from five to seven and a-half years without being promoted; and, if he proposes to take any steps to reorganize the system by which this stagnation in promotion in the lower grades of this Service may be obviated?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): A similar Question was addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the hon. Member for

West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) on the 8th of September last, and I have nothing to add to the reply then given. I may, however, observe that it is clearly impossible to carry out any reorganization of a Public Department, with any intention of reducing expenditure, without affecting the rate of promotion in the junior ranks.

ARMY ACT, 1881—REQUISITIONS OF EMERGENCY — IMPRESSMENT OF HORSES, CARTS, &c.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police in Letterkenny, County Donegal, on the 27th of January last, seized a number of horses and carts belonging to farmers of the district whilst on their way to market with their produce for sale, and that without producing any warrant; whether the carts and horses were taken away by the police and the farmers' goods stored in hotel yards, the farmers being prevented from taking them out for sale; whether, among others, one Anthony Donnell, of Maghera, had his horse, cart, and load of flax seized; and, whether the flax was thrown into the yard of Miss Hegarty's hotel, the District Inspector refusing to allow the owner to take it to the market place, only 50 yards distant; if so, whether this was done with the sanction of the Authorities, and under what instructions or by what right?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: On the 27th of January the police at Letterkenny seized for the Military Authorities five carts and horses, two only of which belonged to farmers of the district, who had brought them to market with produce for sale. The produce consisted of flax and shrubs. It is not the case that this was done without producing any warrant. The police both produced and read the warrant to the parties before the seizures were made. No man of the name of Anthony Donnell appears to have had his horse, cart, or load of flax seized. In the case of the carts that were seized, the District Inspector several times requested the owners to remove the loads, or take them to any place in the town they desired. This they would not do. He therefore caused the loads to be removed and

placed in a dry house, the owners being told they could have their goods at any time. The owners subsequently removed them.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Police Authorities in Donegal had previous to the 27th of January last, in accordance with section 114, sub-section (2), caused to be kept at some convenient place, and open for inspection at all reasonable times, a list of persons liable to furnish carriages and animals under the Army Act, 1881; and, whether the orders given by constables for furnishing carriages and animals have been made from such list in regular rotation, in accordance with sub-section (3) of the same section?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he might answer both paragraphs of the Question in the affirmative.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in January last the Lord Lieutenant, by Order, distinctly stating that a case of emergency existed, and signified by him or the Under Secretary, authorized any Field Officer commanding the Forces in County Donegal to issue a requisition of emergency; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of such Order upon the Table; whether the officer so authorized issued such requisition; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of the same upon the Table; and, whether a Justice of the Peace on such requisition issued his warrant for the provision of carriages and animals?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Lord Lieutenant did in January last issue an Emergency Order, signified by the Under Secretary, authorizing the issue of a requisition of emergency by the General Officer commanding the Forces in County Donegal. The officer so authorized did issue such requisition. The Government do not see that, as a matter of practice, any public purpose would be served by laying a Copy of these documents upon the Table, the terms of which will be found in the 115th section of the Army Act of 1881. A Justice of the Peace did issue a

warrant on such requisition for the provision of carriages and animals.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman say whether the requisition and warrant in question were issued before or after the seizure?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Before.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Colonel Kinloch, in command of the 60th Rifles in Donegal, in January last, some days after the seizure of a number of carts and horses in and about Letterkenny for the conveyance of the military to Dunfanaghy, between 20 and 30 miles away, sent word to the owners that their vehicles and animals were at stabling in Dunfanaghy, and that after one day from the date of his communication they would remain at livery, subject to the owners' risk, and to payment by them of the charges for keep; whether this is a proper discharge according to the official interpretation of the Army Act; and, what amount of compensation or hire was paid to Anthony Donnell, of Maghera, in respect of his vehicle and horses seized on the occasion referred to?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Horses and carts were impressed for the conveyance of baggage to Dunfanaghy in January last. Several of the drivers absconded *en route*, and their carts and horses were driven to Dunfanaghy by soldiers. As soon as the officer commanding found that the carts were no longer required he sent word to the owners that they could take them away; and that if they failed to do so the animals would stand at livery at the owners' risk and expense. A compensation was paid to those drivers who accompanied their carts. As the drivers—the owners' servants—voluntarily abandoned their employers' horses and vehicles, I am advised that the course taken by Colonel Kinloch would be considered a reasonable discharge by a County Court Judge acting under section 115 (4) of the Army Act. Anthony Donnell was, on the 2nd of February last, paid 11s., being at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per cwt. per mile, going and returning. As the driver abandoned the cart at Letterkenny no compensation for detention was paid to him.

Colonel King-Harman

**THEATRES BILL—LEGISLATION—THE
FIRE AT OPORTO,**

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to the destruction of another theatre by fire at Oporto, where a great number of lives have been lost, he can state when it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce their Theatres Bill, to diminish, as much as possible, the risk of such accidents in England?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The Government have decided not to introduce a Bill on this subject.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND inquired whether, that being so, the Government would no longer continue to block his Bill.

MR. MATTHEWS: I can give no undertaking to my hon. Friend on this subject.

**NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL
—PRODUCTION OF STOCK CERTIFI-
CATES.**

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has seen the notice issued by the Bank of England requiring all holders of Three per Cent Stock, Consols, and Reduced Three per Cents, to lodge their Stock certificate by a certain day, whether they dissent or assent; whether he is aware that the production of such certificates has never been usual when Stock has been sold or transferred, but simply identification of the party by a broker, and that such Stock certificates, being looked on as valueless, are often put away with papers; and, if he will consider whether it may not prevent many persons expressing their wishes, if they cannot do so except by production of such receipts?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Gentleman's Question is based on a misconception. The notice only applies to Stock certificates to bearer, which constitute the sole title to the Stock to which they refer, and not, as he appears to think, to Stock receipts, which are given when inscribed Stock is transferred, and which have no negotiable value.

**IRELAND — REGISTRY OF DEEDS
OFFICE, DUBLIN.**

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Report of the Treasury Committee appointed to inquire into the system and procedure of the Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin, and dated the 22nd of December, 1885, has been considered by the Treasury; whether the Report contains certain recommendations for the simplification of the existing system, which will reduce the cost of transacting the business of the Office; and, what steps are being taken by the Treasury towards giving effect to these recommendations?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that a Bill is being prepared, and will be introduced after the Easter holidays, giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee which inquired into the registration of deeds in Ireland in the autumn of 1885.

**WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPART-
MENT)—ROYAL SMALL ARMS FAC-
TORY, ENFIELD.**

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that a number of men are again working overtime at the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield; and, if so, whether he will state the reasons for an increase of such overtime?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: About 120 men worked 10 hours a-week overtime for six weeks from February 1 at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, for the purpose of starting the manufacture of the trial order of 350 magazine rifles.

**PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—
BETHNAL GREEN.**

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, When the Report of the Commissioners who held an inquiry into the sanitary condition of Bethnal Green will be laid upon the Table of this House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said, the Report had been

received, and would be laid before Parliament at once.

ARMY MEDICAL STAFF CORPS—
RECRUITS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is a fact that a General Order has recently been issued to officers of the Army Medical Staff Corps restricting the height of recruits for the Corps to the minimum of 5 feet 3 inches; whether an important portion of the duty allocated to the men of the said Corps is to act as litter bearers for the purpose of carrying the wounded men out of action; and, what was the previous minimum standard of height for recruits?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The standard of height of recruits for all the Departmental Corps has been fixed at from 5 feet 3 inches to 5 feet 5 inches. The object of this restriction is to tap, for these non-combatant corps, a stratum of the population of good and often powerful physique. It is not apprehended that there will be any difficulty as to bearers. The previous minimum height was 5 feet 4 inches.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) BILL
—CHARITY TRUSTEES.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will be prepared to state before the Recess what time will be given to the Trustees of Charities, under Regulations to be issued by the Treasury, within which they may express their dissent from the conversion of Stock, should they desire in any case to dissent?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As regards the New Threes no Regulations need be laid down by the Treasury, for the 7th clause of the Bill provides that dissent must be signified by the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds at the request of the Trustees or persons acting in the administration of the Charity to which the Stock belongs, if at all, on or before the 12th of April next. As regards Consols and Reduced Threes, the Regulations will fix June 1 as the latest date by which assents may be sent in in respect of Charitable Trusts; but power will be reserved to treat exceptional cases exceptionally.

Mr. Matthews

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSION IN TRALEE—MRS. BEHANE.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the case of Mrs. Behane, Ballymacaquin Dorney, County Kerry, entered for hearing in September last, does not appear on the list of cases to be heard before the next Sub-Commission sitting in Tralee, though other cases from the same townland and on the same property entered at the same time are listed?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Land Commissioners informed him that the cases listed at the next sittings at Tralee of the Land Sub-Commission will be confined to applications received up to the 27th of November, which embraced already as many cases as the Sub-Commission could be reasonably expected to get through. The originating notice in the case of Mrs. Behane was not received until the 29th of December, after the list of cases had been fixed for the next sittings, and, therefore, could not appear in the present list.

ADMIRALTY—H.M.S. "WASP."

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If it is correct that the gunboat *Wasp*, designed and built with very high bulwarks, was sent to sea with deck ports insufficient for the escape (when breaking on board) of heavy seas from the decks; whether this defect has been rectified in gunboats of similar type; and, by whose instructions a vessel constructed primarily for inshore and river service was sent to sea during the typhoon season?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No; the freeing scuttles of the *Wasp* were exceptionally numerous, and of a large relative area. On the suggestion of the naval officers at the ports where they were fitting out, some additional freeing scuttles have been cut in vessels of similar type; but they were not considered necessary for the safety of the vessel. The *Wasp* was constructed for the general requirements of the service at sea, and to encounter any weather to which she might have been exposed; and not, as the hon. Member implies, for river service.

POST OFFICE--RATES FOR RE-POSTED AUSTRALIAN AND COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that any Australian or other Colonial newspaper that is posted direct from the Colonies to England at a cost of 1d. postage is, if re-posted in this country, charged double the rates fixed for English newspapers, and that these Australian newspapers are stamped "Foreign," and a further charge is made by the English Post Office if these newspapers are posted without the double fee?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. **RAIKES**) (Cambridge University): I have to state that a Colonial newspaper re-directed to the same person, but at another address, in this country is, if it has not been opened, not charged for re-direction; but if re-posted to another person it is liable to the book rate of postage, as the privilege rate conferred by the Newspaper Act of 1870 applies only to newspapers printed and published in this country. Many Colonial newspapers do not, I believe, exceed two ounces in weight, in which case the prepaid book rate would be $\frac{3}{4}$ d. only.

POST OFFICE--POSTAGE FROM DELAGOA BAY—SURCHARGES BY THE CAPE POST OFFICE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that, notwithstanding the fact that the postage from here to Delagoa Bay, East Africa, is 4d. and 5d. according to the route, yet letters posted at Delagoa Bay to England, bearing the full rate in Mozambique postage stamps, are surcharged the full rates from the Cape, through having to pass through the Cape Post Office, and are, in fact, treated as unpaid letters at Cape Town; has his attention been called to the matter by the Secretary of the Post Office, and to a letter, signed A. Blackwood, registered No. 1,782, dated 16th March, 1888; and, has he taken action to remedy the grievance complained of, considering the rapid advance being made by England in Mozambique territory through the Delagoa Bay Railway?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. **RAIKES**) (Cambridge University): The rates of postage on letters sent hence to

Delagoa Bay are those stated by the hon. Member. I am aware that letters posted at Delagoa Bay for England which have been transmitted through the Cape Colony, although bearing the Mozambique postage stamp, have been surcharged by the Cape Post Office, for the reason that no part of the postage represented by the foreign stamps was accounted for to the Cape Post Office for the duty imposed upon it of carrying the letters through the Colony to Cape Town and thence by packet to England. The inconvenience has arisen through the action of the Delagoa Bay Post Office in sending its letters through the Cape Colony without preconceived arrangement. The matter has lately formed the subject of correspondence between the Imperial and Colonial Post Offices, and I have no doubt will be satisfactorily arranged.

WAR OFFICE—SERGEANT INSTRUCTOR J. ELLIOTT.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Sergeant Instructor J. Elliott, after 18 years' service as a First Class Sergeant Instructor, and 12 years' service in the Rifle Brigade, on the 6th of July, 1886, applied for his discharge from the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., and also for leave of absence; whether, by Battalion Orders, dated 3rd July, 1886, and signed by Major C. H. W. Cafe, Adjutant of the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., the discharge certificate of Sergeant Elliott was confirmed for the 6th of July, and whether by the same Orders he was struck off the strength of the Battalion from the 7th of July; whether on his return from leave of absence, and after his discharge had been received, he was, on the 16th of July, placed under arrest and deprived of his pay, until he threatened to go with his wife and family to the workhouse; and whether the reason alleged was because he refused to make himself responsible for irregularities in the matter of recording drills committed by a sergeant appointed to do his duties during his absence; whether the War Office received a letter from Sergeant Elliott, dated the 14th of July, 1886, Ticehurst, and addressed to the Adjutant General, War Office, London, and whether the War Office, in consequence of the said letter, gave any, and what, instructions in the matter; whether, on the 23rd of

July, 1886, Major Cafe cancelled the discharge of Sergeant Elliott, and whether that was done in order to attempt to justify his arrest, and by whose orders, and on what authority, the discharge was cancelled; and, whether Sergeant Elliott was subsequently discharged a second time, and whether any, and what, redress will be made for the placing under arrest and depriving of his pay under the above circumstances of a man over whom the Military Authorities had at the time no authority?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Sergeant Instructor Elliott, of the 1st Cinque Ports R.V.C., did apply for his discharge and also for leave of absence. His discharge was confirmed for the 6th of July, and he was ordered to be struck off the strength from the 7th. On the 6th of July, however, before his discharge had been completed by handing to him his parchment certificate—and I may say that a soldier remains subject to military law till he receives his parchment certificate—he was ordered to fill up and complete his drill attendance book. This he refused to do, and, consequently, his discharge was suspended, and the matter reported to the General Officer commanding the District, who, on July 16, placed him under arrest and cancelled the order for his discharge. Sergeant Elliott subsequently expressed in writing his regret for his disobedience of orders, and begged his Commanding Officer to take a lenient view of his case for the sake of his wife and family, and in consideration of his long service. The General Officer commanding the District accepted this expression of regret, ordered his release from arrest, and approved of his discharge. A letter from Sergeant Elliott, dated the 14th of July, was received at the War Office, and an inquiry into the case was at once instituted.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) — FIRST-CLASS PRISONS—SALARIES OF PRINCIPAL CHAPLAINS.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) asked the Lord Advocate, If it is a fact that the principal chaplains at the three first-class prisons in Scotland—namely, Perth, Glasgow, and Bar-birnie—are paid salaries at a lower rate than the assistant chaplains in England;

Mr. Bernard Coleridge

and, if so, whether he can give any explanation of this anomaly?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, it was not the case that assistant chaplains in the ordinary prisons in England received more than the principal chaplains in the first-class prisons in Scotland; but the assistant chaplains in convict prisons in England started at a higher rate than chaplains of those prisons in Scotland which were referred to by the hon. Member, and rose to the same rate—namely, £300. As there were at present no purely convict prisons in Scotland, there was no such anomaly as was suggested in the latter part of the Question.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR gave Notice that he would call attention to this matter on the Civil Service Estimates.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked, if it was not the case that the assistant chaplains in England began at £250, while the chaplains in Scotland began with £200?

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON said, he believed that was the case.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT, 1885
—SALE OF THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY'S ESTATES.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the letter from the Marquess of Londonderry, dated 20th February, 1888, to his tenants in County Down, urging them to purchase their holdings from him "at 20 years' purchase of their present rent," and the fact that none of the applications for fair rents from the Marquess of Londonderry's tenants have been entered for hearing at the sitting of the Land Court in that district in May next, he will take care that no loan of public money is sanctioned to complete purchases to which the Marquess of Londonderry's tenants may be induced to agree until a full opportunity has been afforded them of having their applications heard and fair rents judicially decreed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that no application for advances on the Marquess of Londonderry's estate have been received. It

has always been the practice of the Land Commissioners that whenever an agreement for sale is signed by a tenant and has been lodged, they satisfy themselves of the security, and provisionally sanction the advance, to allow the tenant a month from the date of such sanction, in which he may apply to stay proceedings. The views and practice of the Land Commissioners in such cases were fully explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Tuesday last, in answer to a Question from the hon. Member.

SCOTCH FISHERIES—LEGISLATION.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with the question of Scotch Fisheries during the present Session, and, in particular, whether it is intended by Government to bring in any measure dealing with the question of trawling and mussel beds; and, if not, whether opportunity will be given to private Members who have Bills before the House dealing with the questions referred to?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said: The Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with salmon fisheries in Scotland; but if the hon. Member referred only to sea fisheries, and particularly to trawling and mussel beds, the Government do not propose to introduce a Bill dealing with those matters, although inquiry has been, and is being, made into them. As regards the last part of the Question, the opportunity of discussing proposals of private matters must depend on the time at the disposal of the House; but if the hon. Gentleman desires to address any further inquiry, it should be to the Leader of the House.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked, if the Government had asked the Scotch Fishery Board to express their opinion as to whether further legislation was desirable?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON asked that Notice be given of the Question.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE BATH MAGISTRATES.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a decision of the Bath

Magistrates given last Monday (19th March) in which a man named John Sartoris was sent to prison for one month for cutting and carrying away two hazel sticks, the value of which could not be more than 2d.; whether he will require the depositions in the case to be sent to him; and, whether he will take the case into his consideration?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (in reply) said, he had received a Report from the Magistrates on this case, and he had received the depositions, which showed that the man had stolen two saplings of three years' growth, valued at 1s., out of an enclosed private garden, thus spoiling a row of trees. There were no less than 22 convictions against the prisoner, several of them for similar offences. Certainly he did not consider it a case in which to interfere with the sentence.

DOG LICENCE—OFFICERS OF INLAND REVENUE.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether officers of Inland Revenue are permitted to keep dogs without paying a licence; and, whether an Inland Revenue officer is acting within his legal right in so doing?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The answer is, No, Sir.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—PIER AT ROSSCARBERRY.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the estimated cost of the new pier at Rosscarberry, County Cork; whether the work is completed; what was the term fixed by contract for its completion; for how many years has the building been going on; whether the first severe storm to which it has been subjected has severely damaged the structure, sweeping away many of the blocks of stone and concrete; and, whether the County Surveyor has taken over the pier from the Board of Works?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I am informed that the estimated cost of the pier referred to is £4,000. The work was commenced in January, 1885, and the contract provided for completion in November of that year. Four blocks

were removed and others damaged by the severe storm of January last; but the injury has been repaired. The work is now practically complete, but has not yet been transferred to the county.

ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS—THE RETIRED LIST.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Army Medical Officers of the Retired List re-employed will receive the same pay, allowances, and military status as other officers of their rank; and, whether their additional service will count for increased pension when compulsorily retired by age; and, if not, what advantages they will derive?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: As regards pay and allowances, the Regulations limit the payment to a retired medical officer to £150, in addition to his retired pay. As regards military status, such officers are entitled, under certain restrictions, to the rank and position which they held in the Army Medical Department before their retirement. They do not count service subsequent to retirement towards increase of pension.

ADMIRALTY—SHEERNESS DOCKYARD—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, in addition to the 25 men who are to be discharged on the 31st instant from the Boiler Making Department in Sheerness Dockyard, a further discharge of 45 men is contemplated; and, whether, since some of the men have worked upwards of 20 years in the Yard, he would consider if this step could be avoided by giving some of the iron work for the new ships to be constructed to be done in the boiler shops?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) (who replied) said: Owing to the falling off of the amount of boiler work at Sheerness Dockyard a further discharge of about 45 men will be necessary. Should extra hands be required in the Constructor's Department for work on shipbuilding, consideration will be given to such of the discharged men as are qualified for the

work, and are prepared to accept the rates of pay given for work of that class.

RED SEA PORTS—PORT TRUST AT ADEN.

Mr. T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What prospect there is of the early establishment of a Port Trust at Aden, charged with powers to execute the much needed improvements in that Port, in conformity with the Act recently passed by the Bombay Legislature for this purpose?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): In reply to a telegram of the 17th instant, the Government of India have informed the Secretary of State that this matter is under consideration.

SCOTLAND—THE HIGHLANDS—THE FREE CHURCH CONFERENCE AT DINGWALL.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the Conference of Free Church Ministers and Laymen at Dingwall regarding the present condition of the Highlands, and the Resolutions passed by the Conference; and, whether the Government intend doing anything in reference to the matter?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, the Secretary for Scotland had seen a newspaper report of a meeting held at Dingwall on the 23rd of February, to which he presumed the hon. Member referred. Some of the matters referred to—such as fishery loans, harbours, postal communication, &c.—had already been dealt with. The whole question of the condition of the crofters, as the hon. Gentleman was probably aware, was engaging the anxious attention of the Government.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS AT WICKLOW.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will inquire into the cause of the delay in fixing the rents of four tenants of Park Ashford, County Wicklow; whether it is true, that on hearing the landlord's appeal from the decision of the Sub-Commissioners, the Chief Commissioner stated that a Court Valuer would be sent to

Mr. Jackson

value the land, which has not been done; and, when the tenants may expect to have their rents decided on?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners assume that this Question has reference to four cases on the estate of Mr. Gunn Cuninghame, whose appeal against the decision of the Sub-Commission was heard by them in January last, and referred to two Court Valuers to report upon. The Report of the Valuers has been delayed, in consequence of the holdings being covered with snow on two several occasions when they proceeded to inspect. The Commissioners hope to be able to give their decision in these cases within the course of a few weeks.

SCOTLAND — RIOT AT CLASHMORE PARK—CASE OF HUGH MATHESON.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Secretary for Scotland has taken steps to test the accuracy of the five statutory declarations received by him on the 15th instant, emitted by inhabitants of Clashmore, testifying that during the riot at Clashmore Park, for participation in which Hugh Matheson is now undergoing 12 months' imprisonment, Matheson was in the house of Hector Mackenzie at a distance from the scene of the riot; and, if an inquiry has been instituted, when he expects to be able to announce its result?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute) (who replied) said, inquiry was being made into this matter, and it was hoped information would be received in a few days. It would at once be considered by the Secretary for Scotland.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATIVE POPULATION OF NATAL.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is an approximately correct estimate to place the Native population of Natal at about 400,000, of which about 150,000 are on Native locations, 50,000 on Crown lands, and 200,000 on private farms; whether the owners of private farms are now, to a large extent, fencing in their farms, and turning away the great bulk of the Native squatters; whether these squatters possess about 250,000 head of stock;

whether troubles have already occurred in consequence of the Natives being turned away and the farms fenced in; and, whether the Government will place locations in Zululand at the disposal of the Natal Government, in order that the Native squatters, when turned off farms, may be able to return to Zululand?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The hon. Member is probably right in estimating the present Native population of Natal at 400,000; but the proportion of those living on private lands is believed to be not more than 175,000, if so many, and to be less than that of those living on locations. The number of their horned stock is probably about 200,000. The land difficulty to which the hon. Member refers in the second and fourth paragraphs of his Question has been known to exist for several years; but it is believed that the difficulty is less serious than he appears to suggest. It is impossible at present to say whether locations could be found in Zululand for Natives wishing to quit Natal; but if it should hereafter be found that there is a surplus of land in Zululand beyond the requirements of the Native population there would be no objection to the migration of Natal Natives.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY AT CHIPPING NORTON.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the organized attacks upon the Salvation Army at Chipping Norton by a gang of persons known there by the name of the "Skeleton Army," who form processions behind a coffin and attack the Salvationists on their way to their place of meeting; if he is aware that on Saturday, 10th March, a Salvationist named Betteridge and several women were knocked down and indecently assaulted in the open streets, and that similar scenes took place on Sunday 11th March and Monday 12th March; if he is aware that the Salvation Army have repeatedly appealed to the police for protection, and been refused, the police standing by declining to interfere when called upon, and that a special appeal to Captain Owen, the Superintendent of the County Police, was made by the Salvationist leaders for protection against

the Skeleton Army on the 19th instant, to which he replied on the 21st, refusing to interfere; and, will he at once instruct Captain Owen to afford to these persons the protection against ill-treatment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I referred the written statement which the hon. Member sent me on this subject to the Chief Constable of Oxfordshire, who informs me that the facts therein alleged are greatly exaggerated. The Superintendent of Police at Norton states that if the assaults referred to have taken place it has not been in view of the police. Neither himself nor any of the police under him have been asked to take anyone into custody. I do not gather from the letter of the Chief Constable of the 21st instant that he refused to interfere; but he said it was not possible for him to provide a police guard for the processionists. He informs me that he has only four men at Norton; and he cannot, without great inconvenience to the rest of the county, provide more. If there is any ground for saying that the Chief Constable has been remiss in his duty, complaint should be made to the Justices in Quarter Sessions, under whose authority he acts.

INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE DIVISION)—ASSISTANT CLERKS.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If there will be any examination for the position of assistant clerks in the Excise Division of the Inland Revenue in May next, as usual; if not, will he order that candidates who are within the limit of age at the usual date shall be eligible for the next examination whenever it may take place?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: No examination for admission into the Excise will be held in May next, as there will not be any vacancies then existing, or in prospect, to which the successful candidates at such an examination could be appointed. I think it would be extremely undesirable to hold examinations when there is no prospect of the successful candidates being found employment.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — SUBMARINE MINERS, MERSEY DIVISION.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for War,

Mr. Caine

If it is true that Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, who has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of the Submarine Miners, has had no experience in submarine mining, engineering, or yachting, whilst Captain Beloe, his senior officer, was willing to accept the appointment, and that Captain Beloe is a civil engineer by profession, has been two months at Chatham in the Submarine Mining Department, three years in the Submarine Mining Service as a Volunteer, and is an experienced yachtsman; and, if it be so, would he explain why has Captain Beloe been superseded?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horn-castle): Yes, Sir; Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of Submarine Miners. Captain Beloe was not appointed to the command of the corps, because, in the opinion of the Commanding Royal Engineer and of the General Officer commanding the Northern District, his appointment would not have been for the interest of the Service.

CYPRUS—THE ANNUAL TRIBUTE.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received any communications from officers who have administered the government of Cyprus, urging that the inhabitants should be released from the annual Tribute now paid to the Governments of England and France, and that more money should be spent on public works in the Island; and, whether he will lay such Reports upon the Table of the House? The hon. Gentleman also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that, on the 27th of December last, a mass meeting was held at Nicosia, the Capital of Cyprus, at which Resolutions were passed, asking for relief from taxation, and condemning the system under which an annual payment of £99,000 was made out of the Taxes to England and France; whether the Resolutions were presented to the High Commissioner by the Archbishop for transmission to the Colonial Office; and, whether he will lay the Resolutions upon the Table of the House, together with the answer of the Secretary of State for the Colonies?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Certain proposals have, from time to time, been made by officers administering the government of Cyprus for lightening the burden of the Tribute by commutation, not by abolition. A larger expenditure on public works has been urged, as will be seen by reference to Parliamentary Paper, C 3,661, of 1883; but it was decided by the then Secretary of State that the annual expenditure on this head should be limited to £13,000. As regards the next Question, meetings have been held in different districts of the Island and Resolutions passed embodying the views of those present in regard to the state of affairs; but in those Resolutions the question of the Tribute and its present destination was not mentioned. There will be no objection to presenting the Correspondence; but it will be more convenient to include it in a collection of general Correspondence relating to the affairs of the Island, which is in course of preparation.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT—RABBIT COURSING.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged cruelties at so-called "rabbit coursing" matches in enclosed spaces, as set forth in correspondence in *The Standard* of the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd instant; and, whether it has been held that such practices do not come within the Cruelty to Animals Act; and, if so, whether the Government will take steps to amend the Law so as to prevent the continuance of such coursing?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have read the newspaper correspondence to which the hon. Member has referred. A decision of the Court of Queen's Bench certainly appears to show that the facts, as alleged, are not an infringement of the Statute for the prevention of cruelty to animals. It is a matter for consideration whether the law can be amended. Meanwhile, I hope that public opinion will be strong enough to check practices which cannot, by any stretch of language, be considered "sport."

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL FOR DISEASES OF THE SKIN.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the constant charges in the public Press of the wilful misappropriation of the funds of St. John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin; whether he is aware that no legal action has been taken against any of the members and late members of the Board of Management making such charges; and, whether, at the present time, an appeal for funds is being made, and their receipt publicly acknowledged, on behalf of the Hospital; if so, whether he will instruct the Public Prosecutor to take action in the matter, with a view to protect the public from possible fraud?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a letter from the authorities of the Hospital, who inform me that an action for libel is now pending, at their instance, against a weekly journal with reference to the charges in question. It is true that subscriptions are now being received and publicly acknowledged. On the 18th of January the subscribers, at a special general meeting, passed, by an overwhelming majority, a vote of confidence in the Board of Management. I can discover no reason which would justify interference on my part.

POST OFFICE—THE "NEWSPAPER TRAIN" FOR EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW.

MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Postmaster General, Whether a train, known as the newspaper train, which conveyed mails and newspapers to London and other parts of England from Edinburgh and Glasgow, leaving those cities at 6 o'clock in the morning, has been stopped, because of the refusal of the Post Office to make a small payment, which would have enabled the train to be continued; and, whether, the train being stopped, there is any Mail Service which enables letters posted early in the morning in Scotland to be delivered the same day in London?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A train leaving Edinburgh and Glasgow for the South at 6 a.m., which I believe was largely employed by the newspaper

publishers for the conveyance of their train parcels, and by which mail bags were also forwarded, was not long since discontinued; and it is the case that the Government was not prepared to make such a payment in respect to the mail service as would have secured the continuance of the train. The train in question left Edinburgh and Glasgow too early to be generally available for letters posted early in the morning, and its chief utility was in conveying letters posted during the night. There is no train now running by which the same facilities can be afforded.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT — LABOURERS' COTTAGES, ARDEE UNION.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the cause of the delay in the erection of the labourers' cottages in the Castlebellingham Electoral Division of the Ardee Union, in the county of Louth, the scheme for which was passed at the Local Government Board Inquiry held in October, 1886; and, whether he will take steps to prevent further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, that the scheme for the erection of the labourers' cottages referred to had been duly sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and had also come before the Privy Council. It appeared, from the Minutes of the Guardians, that they were now in communication with the Land Commissioners with a view to having the rent fixed, as the lands were to be taken for a term of years.

MR. T. P. GILL: Might I ask who is the landlord?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: That is not on the Question.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. KILKELLY, R.M.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Captain Walsh, R.M., has been appointed over the head of Mr. Kilkelly, R.M.; whether Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to agree with Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., in the severe sentences he proposed to inflict on certain prisoners charged in connection with the Bodyke evictions; would he state to the House on what ground was Mr. Kilkelly passed over

Mr. Raikes

for promotion; and, whether the seniority list of Resident Magistrates has not appeared in the "Constabulary List" for 40 years till this year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Captain Walsh was promoted to be a second class Resident Magistrate in January last. As regards seniority, his claims were practically identical with those of Mr. Kilkelly. With reference to the general question, and having no regard to the merits of this case, I may say that successive Governments have laid down the rule—and it has been recognized by almost every Department of the Public Service—that seniority is only to be taken into account where other claims are equal, and, failing such equality, preference is to be given to merit and capacity. Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to concur in the sentences referred to. As to the seniority list, it was merely a temporary list, and one purely for Departmental purposes; and as it is not now required for these purposes it has been discontinued.

FORESTRY—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What course Her Majesty's Government propose to take with reference to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Forestry, which sat last year?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government have not yet come to any decision in regard to the recommendations of the Select Committee, and the question is one that will have to be dealt with by the Agricultural Department.

**AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—
LEGISLATION.**

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is able to state when the promised Bill will be introduced for the creation of an independent Agricultural Department?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Bill is in a forward state, and I hope it will be possible to introduce it shortly after Easter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL — OFFICE OF HIGH SHERIFF.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, taking into consideration the altered circumstances and the great changes proposed under the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, Her Majesty's Government will introduce a Bill this Session to 'discontinue the office of High Sheriff in its present form?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): A Committee of the House of Lords has been appointed to inquire into the duties and obligations of High Sheriffs; and the Government will await the Report of that Committee before they proceed with any legislation upon the question.

PUBLIC WORKS AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) (SPECIAL GRANT).

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How much of the £50,000 allotted last year to Ireland, as an equivalent for the contributions to local funds given in Great Britain, has been spent, or it is estimated will be spent, before the close of the financial year; how much of this has been spent on preliminary surveys, and how much in actual work or in subsidies to the owners of sires; and, if the unexpended balance will be credited to Ireland, and spent on local works in the ensuing year, or, as in England, handed over to Local Authorities to diminish the county cess?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (who replied) said: Of the £50,000 voted last year for public works and industries in Ireland £13,500, being in the nature of grants in aid of various fishing, technical, and agricultural schools, and to the Royal Dublin Society for the improvement of the breed of horses, has been paid over to the Institutions entitled to receive them. Owing to the date at which the Vote was taken it has been found impossible to spend the £6,500 provided for piers and roads in Galway and Mayo, and it is proposed to revoke the sum this year, as it must now be surrendered to the Exchequer. Of the £30,000 provided for surveys and works on the Shannon, Barrow, and Bann, it is anticipated that about £17,000 will have been spent

by the 31st instant—namely, £10,500 (about) for works, and the remainder on salaries, surveys, and the preparation of Bills. The unexpended balance of £13,000 must be surrendered to the Exchequer; but it is proposed not only to take a re-Vote for this amount, but also to ask for a further sum of £6,500 for additional works. The total amount included in next year's Estimates for this service represents all that can be usefully spent on the three rivers in the year without further legislation.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that the Scotch Education Code for 1888 was only laid on the Table of the House on the 6th of March, that it was distributed to Members on the 20th of March, and was, therefore, not received by any of the important School Boards in Scotland until the 21st of March, he would, in view of the fact that the only day after the Easter holidays when the subject of the Code could be discussed would be the first day after the House met, postpone the date of its coming into force from the 6th to the 13th of April?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had received very short Notice of the Question, and had not an opportunity of communicating with the Department; but he would endeavour to give effect to the wish expressed in the Question; and he had very little doubt, unless there was some overwhelming Departmental difficulty, that the Code would not come into operation till the 13th of April. He would do all he could in the matter.

MR. SINCLAIR said, there was not only the question of the Code coming into operation, but there was also the question of raising a discussion in the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH pointed out that if the Code did not come into operation till the 13th there would be the greater interval during which to find an opportunity for discussion.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the President of the Joint Government Board, Whether would be distributed to-m

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) replied in the affirmative. He had thought it would be convenient for those hon. Gentlemen who intended leaving town before the Bill could be distributed in ordinary course that they should be able to get copies before the usual time of distribution. He had made arrangements for a limited number of Bills to be in the Vote Office before the Sitting closed this evening.

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) wished to ask a Question of the First Lord of the Treasury as to the course of Business after the Recess. It had been stated that on the Thursday Civil Service Votes and ordinary Motions in Supply would be taken; but he should like to be informed concerning the Business that would be taken on Monday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that the right hon. Gentleman was quite accurate as to his forecast as to Thursday, and the Government hoped to be able to make progress in Supply on that day and Friday. He would, however, state positively to-morrow whether any Business but Supply would be taken on Monday.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked whether the Vote for the Admiralty Buildings would be taken on Thursday after the House re-assembled?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government proposed to defer that particular Vote. It would not be taken without sufficient Notice.

In reply to Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it would not be possible to take the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill until after the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill had been read a second time.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked what Business would be taken to-morrow?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We hope to move one or two unimportant Bills a stage; but the particular Business will be the Adjournment.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he proposed to take the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill on the Friday night after the Recess; and if he intended to make any statement concerning it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he did propose to do so, and also to make an explanatory statement; and if the House would allow him, he saw no reason why it should not be made after 12 o'clock.

POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION—THE SOUTH AFRICAN COLONIES.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Postmaster General, If there was any probability of the South African Colonies coming into the Postal Union?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, he was afraid he could not hold out any hopes in that direction. The South African Colonies had been occasionally sounded on the subject; but at present they did not see their way to joining.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS — FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Courtney, in rising to make the usual Financial Statement of the year, I feel that I have need of the special indulgence of the House, because, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I stand in a somewhat exceptional position this year through the introduction of the Local Government Bill. Generally it falls to the lot of the Chancellor of the Exchequer simply to have to consider the claims of the taxpayers where there is an opportunity for remission of taxation; but upon this occasion the claims of the ratepayers have also to be considered; and I find that I have—if I may use the phrase—a double set of clients—namely, the taxpayers and the ratepayers. I do not believe there is any antagonism of interest between the two.

Most of the taxpayers are ratepayers, and most of the ratepayers are taxpayers, so I hope that there will be no jealousy with regard to the relief which may be extended to either the one or the other of those two classes who contribute equally to public purposes, although the one class contribute to the Imperial and the other to the local purse. The ground over which I shall have to travel is wider, therefore, than it usually is; and I trust that on that account the Committee will permit me to pass, perhaps with more rapidity than in an ordinary year, over some of the details which it is customary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to submit on these occasions.

I commence, as usual, with making a statement in regard to the Expenditure of the past year, or rather the present year. And here I must certainly say that we are placed at some disadvantage, because the Financial Statement has to be made a week before the conclusion of the financial year. I shall give the best estimate I can with regard both to the Revenue and the Expenditure of the year, and the Civil servants who deal with these matters are so experienced that I doubt whether there will be much difference between the figures which I shall lay before the Committee and the final figures which will be submitted to Parliament. But it must be remembered that the figures, which I now give, are, as regards the last week of the financial year, an estimate only.

I take first the Exchequer issues for Expenditure, and hon. Members will be able to compare them with the Estimates, if they will look to page 2 of the Papers issued on this occasion. The total Exchequer issues will be £27,972,000 under the head of Consolidated Fund Charges, or an excess of about £44,000 over the Estimate. This excess is due to an issue somewhat beyond what we put down for the year for the Localization of the Forces Fund. It is not an extra expenditure, but rather an anticipation of what, in the ordinary course, would have been spent in 1888-9, and it is a not unsatisfactory item, because it brings our outlay for this purpose practically to an end.

I will now go through the various items of Supply. The Army expenditure will be £18,167,000, as compared with the total Estimate of £18,394,000,

showing a saving of £227,000. The Navy issues will be £12,326,000, showing a saving of £151,000. The Civil Service Miscellaneous issues will be £18,210,000, showing a saving of £52,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £241,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimates. The expenditure of the Post Office will be £5,403,000, showing a saving of £18,000. The expenditure of the Telegraph Service will be £1,940,000, showing a saving of £10,000. The Packet Service issues will be £698,000, showing a saving of £1,000. For the Customs and Inland Revenue the amount will be £2,708,000, showing a saving of £8,000. For the total Supply Services the amount is £59,452,000, showing a saving of £467,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £656,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure. The total Expenditure is £87,424,000, showing a saving, as compared with the Budget Estimate, of £423,000.

I trust that these figures will not be unsatisfactory to the Committee. I have several remarks to make with regard to them. I do not propose to go into detail with respect to the savings which we have secured. I may state, with regard to the Consolidated Fund Services, that there has been a saving of about £100,000 in the interest of the Unfunded Debt, which saving, of course, has gone to diminish the Funded Debt, being employed as so much more money to pay off that Debt. This has been partly due to the low rate of interest on Treasury and Exchequer Bills, the average of which has been £2 5s. 11d.; but there has also been a saving of £15,000 to which I should like to allude. It is a saving which I have secured by watching more closely the balances at the Bank of England than has hitherto been done. I have not thought it necessary always to renew Treasury Bills on the day when they expired; but I have looked at the needs of the Treasury for the next week or month, and in that way I have kept down the balance at the Bank of England, and the result has been that I have been able to save £15,000, an amount which again goes to the credit of the Sinking Fund. In the next place, I wish to call attention to the fact that there have been no Supplemental Esti-

mates this year for the Army and Navy; and in no year since 1870 have there not been Supplemental Estimates or Votes of Credit for the Navy or the Army, or generally for both. I trust that in view of the constant charges, which are levelled at the great spending Departments, of extravagance, and sometimes of maladministration, I may point to the fact that my two right hon. Friends at the head of those two Departments have this year, for the first time for many years, been able to keep down the expenditure to that which Parliament intended should be spent, and to exercise such a control that there have been none of those Supplementary Estimates which destroy the confidence of Parliament in the preparation of Estimates, and which also destroy the chances of the Chancellor of the Exchequer submitting a successful Budget. Again, I have to say there have been no Supplemental Estimates for the Revenue Departments. This has not happened for the last 20 years. And, again, the Supplemental Estimates for the Civil Services have been lower than in any other year for 20 years, except last year. They have been only £208,000; last year they were £165,000. Of course, I do not include in Supplemental Estimates the grant in aid of roads. I am speaking of Supplemental Estimates in the ordinary sense, which are in excess of the sums voted by Parliament. To sum up, we have spent £423,000 less than the original Estimates, and £612,000 less than our original and Supplementary Estimates taken together.

I now pass to the consideration of the Revenue, and again I am able to submit a fairly satisfactory account to the Committee. I presume that the Committee will wish to have each separate head of Revenue. The revenue from Customs—and here again I may remind the Committee that the revenue for one week is only an estimate—the revenue from Customs is £19,630,000, or £30,000 more than the Estimate; but it is considerably less than the receipts of last year, owing to the reduction of the Tobacco Duty. The receipts from Excise are £25,597,000, or an excess of £305,000 over the Estimate. The Stamps amount to £12,940,000, showing an increase, on which I shall presently dilate, of £1,182,000. The Land Tax amounts to £1,050,000, showing a deficiency of £15,000. The House Duty

amounts to £1,890,000, showing a deficiency of £30,000; and the Income Tax is £14,340,000, or exactly the sum which it was estimated to produce. That amount may be varied slightly in the coming week; but if there is any change it will be that it will realize somewhat more than the Estimate. The total produce of taxes is thus £75,447,000, showing an excess over our Estimates of £1,472,000. Post Office receipts are £8,650,000, showing an increase of £50,000; Telegraph Service, £1,950,000, which is the exact estimate; Crown Lands are £390,000, or an excess of £20,000; Interest on advances for local works and purchase money of Suez Canal is £242,000, an excess of £2,000; Miscellaneous revenue is £2,910,000, showing a decrease, as compared with the Estimate, of £90,000. The total Non-Tax Revenue is £14,142,000, and is £18,000 less than the Estimate. The total Revenue is £89,589,000, being £1,454,000 more than the estimated Budget receipts.

The Committee will wish to have some little information with regard to some of the items of increase. The total Estimate of Customs was £19,600,000, and the receipts I put down at £19,630,000. This is a remarkably close estimate, looking at the enormous sum involved. And, pointing to that, I must allude to the great loss which the State has sustained in the death of Mr. Seldon, who was a most accomplished statistician, an authority on Customs, and most conversant with these matters, and who has guided, and well guided, many Chancellors of the Exchequer in succession. I am glad to recognize, and I think it right that Parliament and the country should recognize, the services of our Civil servants in the great Departments who are performing their work in comparative obscurity. It is a subject on which I always feel strongly, and it is for that reason that I call attention to the matter, and wish to pay a tribute to the memory of one who served us well. It is right that the little-noticed work of the Civil Service should not be forgotten or undervalued. Four men of equal ability leave the University at one time. One man becomes a Bishop, another a Judge, another a Member of Parliament, and perhaps a Minister, and the fourth becomes, in the capacity of a permanent Civil servant, the mainstay, perhaps the head, of a Department of the State. He

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enjoys less fame and less remuneration than any of the others. That is all the more reason why, where there is merit and ability on the part of a Civil servant similar to that which is displayed in other careers in life, that merit and ability should be gratefully recognized by his countrymen.

Now, I will say a very few words with regard to the smaller differences in the Customs revenue. Coffee and its two satellites, chicory and cocoa, never show any remarkable eccentricities. They seldom increase the Revenue beyond the Estimate. They are dull items, and there is no elasticity in them whatever. Tea is fairly, though not remarkably, progressive. In 1886-7 the receipts from tea were £4,515,000, and in 1887-8 they were £4,618,000, or an increase of £103,000. This is somewhat more than in proportion to the increase in the population; but I cannot say that it is a revenue which shows much elasticity. With regard to tobacco, where a reduction in the duty took place last year, the estimated reduction of receipts was £515,000; but it has actually been £595,000, an excess over our estimated loss of £80,000. That loss has not been due so much to any miscalculation of the Customs or Inland Revenue, as to the fact that very considerable delay took place in the voting of the Budget last year; and, consequently, the Watering Clauses, which prevent an excess of water being put into tobacco, did not come into operation till a later period of the year than we reckoned for. When they did come into operation, they considerably increased the consumption of tobacco—that is to say, the individual smoker smoked more tobacco and less water in every pipe he consumed. Since the 1st of August there is a gratifying increase in the amount of unmanufactured tobacco cleared of 26,900,000 lbs. weight as against 25,900,000 lbs. in the corresponding period of the previous year, being an increase of 1,000,000 lbs. Our calculations, therefore, are beginning to be justified. The House will remember that I defended the reduction of the Tobacco Duty on the ground that extra duty had checked consumption. Just before the duty was raised in 1877 the consumption was 1·49 lbs. per head per annum. In 1882 it had fallen to 1·12 lbs. per head, and it continued at

about that point till last year. But in the last five months of last year, when the Watering Clauses and the reduction of duty came together into operation, the consumption went back to where it stood before the duty was raised, and it stands now at 1·49 lbs. per head per annum.

The last heads of Customs and Revenue to which I need refer are spirits and wine. I must take these in connection with home-made spirits and beer, and treat them under the general head of drink revenue. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) called special attention to the falling-off in the revenue under this head some time ago. In 1876-7 the revenue was £30,909,000; in the year 1887-8, which we have just concluded, it was £27,013,000, showing a fall of no less than £3,866,000. I do not know whether it will be satisfactory to the Committee—it depends whether they look at the question as moralists or as financiers—to know that that decline in the revenue from drink has been arrested during the last year. For the first time for many years, there has not been a decline in the revenue from drink—[“The Jubilee!”] There has been an increase—a very considerable increase—in the amount derived from beer; and I am credibly informed, and I think that an hon. Member behind me has anticipated the explanation, that the great loyal demonstration of last year, and the festivities connected with it, did lead to an increased consumption of beer. In the summer months of last year the revenue from beer showed a very great elasticity, and it amounted for the whole year to £8,710,000, the largest sum ever realized under this head. Throughout the year foreign spirits were stationary. In home spirits the consumption increased, as compared with the Estimate, by £170,000. Wine only fell off £28,000, whereas we had calculated upon a loss of £100,000. On the whole, there is an increase of £300,000 over the Estimate on account of the revenue from drink.

This is, perhaps, a proper point in my Statement to remind the Committee that consumable articles generally no longer yield to the Revenue what they did. In 1876-7 taxes on consumable articles yielded £1 6s. 1d. per head; whereas in 1887-8 they yielded only £1 2s. 3d. per head. Thus that por-

tion of the Revenue to which the great consuming classes chiefly contribute is a halting and an inelastic Revenue. But in contrast to the consumable articles stands the next great item of Revenue—namely, Stamps. I call the special attention of the Committee to this subject. Stamps have produced in the present year under their two great heads of Death Duties and general stamps—£8,160,000 from Death Duties, and £4,780,000 under the head of general stamps; being a total of £12,940,000, or £1,160,000 more than last year. Now, this large item of Revenue is contributed mainly by the well-to-do classes; and I must say that the whole of the area which is covered by the Stamp Duties constitutes a very promising field for the fiscal reaper. We have had a very good crop from it this last year; and I am not sure that the crop has reached its maximum, and that further revenue may not be derived from that source.

I cannot pass away from this subject without saying one word about the yield of the Probate Duty, which has shown such extraordinary results this year. I may mention that it began to produce those extraordinary results just at the date when, in a premature speech, I declared that the Death Duties yielded a most steady and average revenue. Since then the Probate Duty has heaped coals of fire on my head by pouring unwontedly large sums into the Exchequer. There have fallen in two of the largest estates that have ever had to submit to the tax, both of them amounting to upwards of £3,000,000; and £3,000,000 means a cheque for £90,000. But that will not exhaust the revenue from these estates, because there are Legacy Duties to follow, and which will be paid in the ensuing year. There was also a third estate of £1,800,000. While there have been these three windfalls—and I wish the Committee to consider them as windfalls—while we have had these three windfalls in the present year, there have been only three estates of £3,000,000 before during the last 20 years. Then, again, we have had a larger number of estates than usual which pay Legacy Duty at the rate of 10 per cent. To sum up, the Probate and Legacy Duties give £7,300,000; the Succession Duty gives only £820,000, and of that £150,000 is contributed by settled personality. This shows how

small a part is played by Succession Duty in the finances of the country. Taking Stamps as a whole, while, of course, it cannot be inferred that this great increase in the revenue is necessarily a proof of growing prosperity, as it includes that which is raised from the Death Duties, yet there has been also a great increase in the revenue from business stamps, properly speaking. There is an increase of £440,000 in general stamps, and that, I think, may be fairly taken as a confirmation of the revival of the trade of which the first symptoms have begun to appear. There has been a distinct increase in business, which is revealed to us in part by the increase in this portion of the Stamp Duties.

Of the Income Tax I cannot speak with any degree of satisfaction. The yield of the tax per penny was £2,000,000 in 1884-5; £1,980,000 in the year following; £1,960,000 in 1886-7; and it is £1,955,000 in 1887-8. Thus, since 1884-5, there has been a small decrease from year to year in the yield of the penny, instead of an increase, as might have been hoped. Hon. Members will remember that the Income Tax is affected not only by the business of the year, but by that of preceding years, because the average of three years is taken in calculating business profits, and we have been passing through a cycle of unsatisfactory years. With reviving trade we may look for some little improvement; but when I come to estimate the Revenue for next year it will be impossible to hope for any large increase of revenue from this source.

I will now sum up the results for the present year. The actual Revenue is £89,589,000; the Estimate was £89,135,000; so that the excess over the Estimate is £1,454,000. The saving on Expenditure was £422,000; the surplus for which I estimated was £289,000; and I am, therefore, able to lay before the Committee a realized surplus for the year 1887-8 of £2,165,000, the largest since 1873-4.

May I pause for a moment to examine the effect of these satisfactory results upon our balances? I began the year with a balance of £5,950,000, and I leave off with a balance of £7,438,000—an increase of £1,488,000. It is always necessary, at this time of the year, to have a large balance in hand, looking to the dividends payable

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in April; and I have a special reason, which the Committee can readily understand, for desiring to have a very handsome balance on March the 31st this year, in order that I may be comfortably prepared to hand over their sovereigns to any holders of the New Threes who may prefer to ask for £100 in money rather than to take new Stock, which now stands at £100 $\frac{3}{4}$. It is well to have a strong balance to be able to meet such demands as may be made upon us.

I will now show the effect of the year's finance upon the Debt; but before doing so I must pause for a moment here to revert to a somewhat technical and dry subject—namely, the Local Loans Debt and the Local Loans Fund which I established last year. According to the system which I then ventured to inaugurate, a special account was to be kept of what may be called the Reproductive Debt of the country. It is money lent out to Local Authorities, against which the country receives as income the interest which is paid by the Local Authorities. There will now be presented to Parliament, for the first time, a clear account showing how much is loaned, what is outstanding, what each loan costs us, what we shall receive in return, and what additional sums we have lent in the course of the year. There will be a capital account and a revenue account. The capital account will show that the National Debt Commissioners have lent during this year £3,206,000, and that they have received in repayment £1,906,000, so that there is a balance of £1,300,000 of new advances. According to the system which we inaugurated, there will be issued new Local Loan Stock against this sum. Hon. Members will see that they will now be able to watch from year to year how much we lend to Local Authorities and how much we receive from them. We have not yet been able to make up our final statement, because we have felt it our duty to see what bad debts have been incurred in the course of the present year. This is a contingency we ought always to remember, and which ought always to be brought home to Parliament. I cannot help thinking that we have in the past too much encouraged the idea that if there is a margin between the rate of interest at which we lend and the rate of interest we receive, the trans-

actions are necessarily profitable. I now come to the Revenue account. We have received as interest on loans £1,258,000; we have paid as interest on Local Loans Stock and on Short Loans £1,033,000; and that shows a surplus of £225,000, which is to be charged with that restitution annuity of £130,000 which was established by the Local Loans Bill—an annuity which is to restore the arrears which were lost before these transactions began. In former years, the Committee will remember, £4,000,000 had been lost by bad debts, and before we can say that this banking business, as we may call it, is remunerative, we must restore, even if it be by degrees, the £4,000,000 we have lost. The figures leave a surplus of £95,000, but from that the expense of the lending departments ought to be deducted; and that leaves a balance of about £50,000, for what may be practically regarded as a Sinking Fund, against which we have to set off some bad debts incurred in the year. I am not aware of any large amounts, but there are one or two small amounts, and a Vote will have to be taken to wipe them out. In that way it will be brought home to the House where the money is lost, how it is lost, and through what means it is lost.

At present it will be more interesting to show what we have been doing with the National Debt. Including the increase in our balances of £1,488,000, which is equivalent to a reduction of Debt, we have diminished our liabilities during the year by no less a sum than £7,601,000. But it is more to the point, perhaps, in judging of a particular year, to know how much money belonging to the year 1887-8, the current year, has been, or will be, appropriated to the reduction of the Debt. Hon. Members will remember the complaints that were made against me last year, when I introduced my Budget, that I had been content with a smaller sum than I ought to have taken for reducing the National Debt, and it was said that the result in paying off the Debt would consequently be unsatisfactory. At all events, I either have paid off or shall pay off, with moneys actually belonging to this year, £7,293,000—the largest sum that has ever been paid off out of the moneys of a single year since 1872-3.

What, then, are the main features of the past year? For the first time since 1870, there have been no Supplementary

the Skeleton Army on the 19th instant, to which he replied on the 21st, refusing to interfere; and, will he at once instruct Captain Owen to afford to these persons the protection against ill-treatment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I referred the written statement which the hon. Member sent me on this subject to the Chief Constable of Oxfordshire, who informs me that the facts therein alleged are greatly exaggerated. The Superintendent of Police at Norton states that if the assaults referred to have taken place it has not been in view of the police. Neither himself nor any of the police under him have been asked to take anyone into custody. I do not gather from the letter of the Chief Constable of the 21st instant that he refused to interfere; but he said it was not possible for him to provide a police guard for the processionists. He informs me that he has only four men at Norton; and he cannot, without great inconvenience to the rest of the county, provide more. If there is any ground for saying that the Chief Constable has been remiss in his duty, complaint should be made to the Justices in Quarter Sessions, under whose authority he acts.

INLAND REVENUE (EXCISE DIVISION)—ASSISTANT CLERKS.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If there will be any examination for the position of assistant clerks in the Excise Division of the Inland Revenue in May next, as usual; if not, will he order that candidates who are within the limit of age at the usual date shall be eligible for the next examination whenever it may take place?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: No examination for admission into the Excise will be held in May next, as there will not be any vacancies then existing, or in prospect, to which the successful candidates at such an examination could be appointed. I think it would be extremely undesirable to hold examinations when there is no prospect of the successful candidates being found employment.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — SUBMARINE MINERS, MERSEY DIVISION.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness) asked the Secretary of State for War,

If it is true that Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, who has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of the Submarine Miners, has had no experience in submarine mining, engineering, or yachting, whilst Captain Beloe, his senior officer, was willing to accept the appointment, and that Captain Beloe is a civil engineer by profession, has been two months at Chatham in the Submarine Mining Department, three years in the Submarine Mining Service as a Volunteer, and is an experienced yachtsman; and, if it be so, would he explain why has Captain Beloe been superseded?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horn-castle): Yes, Sir; Captain Montgomery, of the 1st Cheshire Engineer Volunteers, has been gazetted Major of the Mersey Division of Submarine Miners. Captain Beloe was not appointed to the command of the corps, because, in the opinion of the Commanding Royal Engineer and of the General Officer commanding the Northern District, his appointment would not have been for the interest of the Service.

CYPRUS—THE ANNUAL TRIBUTE.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received any communications from officers who have administered the government of Cyprus, urging that the inhabitants should be released from the annual Tribute now paid to the Governments of England and France, and that more money should be spent on public works in the Island; and, whether he will lay such Reports upon the Table of the House? The hon. Gentleman also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that, on the 27th of December last, a mass meeting was held at Nicosia, the Capital of Cyprus, at which Resolutions were passed, asking for relief from taxation, and condemning the system under which an annual payment of £99,000 was made out of the Taxes to England and France; whether the Resolutions were presented to the High Commissioner by the Archbishop for transmission to the Colonial Office; and, whether he will lay the Resolutions upon the Table of the House, together with the answer of the Secretary of State for the Colonies?

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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Certain proposals have, from time to time, been made by officers administering the government of Cyprus for lightening the burden of the Tribute by commutation, not by abolition. A larger expenditure on public works has been urged, as will be seen by reference to Parliamentary Paper, C 3,661, of 1883; but it was decided by the then Secretary of State that the annual expenditure on this head should be limited to £13,000. As regards the next Question, meetings have been held in different districts of the Island and Resolutions passed embodying the views of those present in regard to the state of affairs; but in those Resolutions the question of the Tribute and its present destination was not mentioned. There will be no objection to presenting the Correspondence; but it will be more convenient to include it in a collection of general Correspondence relating to the affairs of the Island, which is in course of preparation.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT—RABBIT COURSING.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged cruelties at so-called "rabbit coursing" matches in enclosed spaces, as set forth in correspondence in *The Standard* of the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd instant; and, whether it has been held that such practices do not come within the Cruelty to Animals Act; and, if so, whether the Government will take steps to amend the Law so as to prevent the continuance of such coursing?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have read the newspaper correspondence to which the hon. Member has referred. A decision of the Court of Queen's Bench certainly appears to show that the facts, as alleged, are not an infringement of the Statute for the prevention of cruelty to animals. It is a matter for consideration whether the law can be amended. Meanwhile, I hope that public opinion will be strong enough to check practices which cannot, by any stretch of language, be considered "sport."

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL FOR DISEASES OF THE SKIN.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the constant charges in the public Press of the wilful misappropriation of the funds of St. John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin; whether he is aware that no legal action has been taken against any of the members and late members of the Board of Management making such charges; and, whether, at the present time, an appeal for funds is being made, and their receipt publicly acknowledged, on behalf of the Hospital; if so, whether he will instruct the Public Prosecutor to take action in the matter, with a view to protect the public from possible fraud?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a letter from the authorities of the Hospital, who inform me that an action for libel is now pending, at their instance, against a weekly journal with reference to the charges in question. It is true that subscriptions are now being received and publicly acknowledged. On the 18th of January the subscribers, at a special general meeting, passed, by an overwhelming majority, a vote of confidence in the Board of Management. I can discover no reason which would justify interference on my part.

POST OFFICE—THE "NEWSPAPER TRAIN" FOR EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW.

MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow) asked the Postmaster General, Whether a train, known as the newspaper train, which conveyed mails and newspapers to London and other parts of England from Edinburgh and Glasgow, leaving those cities at 6 o'clock in the morning, has been stopped, because of the refusal of the Post Office to make a small payment, which would have enabled the train to be continued; and, whether, the train being stopped, there is any Mail Service which enables letters posted early in the morning in Scotland to be delivered the same day in London?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A train leaving Edinburgh and Glasgow for the South at 6 a.m., which I believe was largely employed by the newspaper

publishers for the conveyance of their train parcels, and by which mail bags were also forwarded, was not long since discontinued; and it is the case that the Government was not prepared to make such a payment in respect to the mail service as would have secured the continuance of the train. The train in question left Edinburgh and Glasgow too early to be generally available for letters posted early in the morning, and its chief utility was in conveying letters posted during the night. There is no train now running by which the same facilities can be afforded.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT — LABOURERS' COTTAGES, ARDEE UNION.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the cause of the delay in the erection of the labourers' cottages in the Castlebellingham Electoral Division of the Ardee Union, in the county of Louth, the scheme for which was passed at the Local Government Board Inquiry held in October, 1886; and, whether he will take steps to prevent further delay?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, that the scheme for the erection of the labourers' cottages referred to had been duly sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and had also come before the Privy Council. It appeared, from the Minutes of the Guardians, that they were now in communication with the Land Commissioners with a view to having the rent fixed, as the lands were to be taken for a term of years.

MR. T. P. GILL: Might I ask who is the landlord?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: That is not on the Question.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. KILKELLY, R.M.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Captain Walsh, R.M., has been appointed over the head of Mr. Kilkelly, R.M.; whether Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to agree with Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., in the severe sentences he proposed to inflict on certain prisoners charged in connection with the Bodyke evictions; would he state to the House on what ground was Mr. Kilkelly passed over

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for promotion; and, whether the seniority list of Resident Magistrates has not appeared in the "Constabulary List" for 40 years till this year?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Captain Walsh was promoted to be a second class Resident Magistrate in January last. As regards seniority, his claims were practically identical with those of Mr. Kilkelly. With reference to the general question, and having no regard to the merits of this case, I may say that successive Governments have laid down the rule—and it has been recognized by almost every Department of the Public Service—that seniority is only to be taken into account where other claims are equal, and, failing such equality, preference is to be given to merit and capacity. Mr. Kilkelly is the magistrate who refused to concur in the sentences referred to. As to the seniority list, it was merely a temporary list, and one purely for Departmental purposes; and as it is not now required for these purposes it has been discontinued.

FORESTRY—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What course Her Majesty's Government propose to take with reference to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Forestry, which sat last year?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government have not yet come to any decision in regard to the recommendations of the Select Committee, and the question is one that will have to be dealt with by the Agricultural Department.

**AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT—
LEGISLATION.**

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is able to state when the promised Bill will be introduced for the creation of an independent Agricultural Department?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Bill is in a forward state, and I hope it will be possible to introduce it shortly after Easter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—OFFICE OF HIGH SHERIFF.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, taking into consideration the altered circumstances and the great changes proposed under the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, Her Majesty's Government will introduce a Bill this Session to discontinue the office of High Sheriff in its present form?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): A Committee of the House of Lords has been appointed to inquire into the duties and obligations of High Sheriffs; and the Government will await the Report of that Committee before they proceed with any legislation upon the question.

PUBLIC WORKS AND INDUSTRIES (IRELAND) (SPECIAL GRANT).

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How much of the £50,000 allotted last year to Ireland, as an equivalent for the contributions to local funds given in Great Britain, has been spent, or it is estimated will be spent, before the close of the financial year; how much of this has been spent on preliminary surveys, and how much in actual work or in subsidies to the owners of sires; and, if the unexpended balance will be credited to Ireland, and spent on local works in the ensuing year, or, as in England, handed over to Local Authorities to diminish the county cess?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (who replied) said: Of the £50,000 voted last year for public works and industries in Ireland £13,500, being in the nature of grants in aid of various fishing, technical, and agricultural schools, and to the Royal Dublin Society for the improvement of the breed of horses, has been paid over to the Institutions entitled to receive them. Owing to the date at which the Vote was taken it has been found impossible to spend the £6,500 provided for piers and roads in Galway and Mayo, and it is proposed to revoke the sum this year, as it must now be surrendered to the Exchequer. Of the £30,000 provided for surveys and works on the Shannon, Barrow, and Bann, it is anticipated that about £17,000 will have been spent

by the 31st instant—namely, £10,500 (about) for works, and the remainder on salaries, surveys, and the preparation of Bills. The unexpended balance of £13,000 must be surrendered to the Exchequer; but it is proposed not only to take a re-Vote for this amount, but also to ask for a further sum of £6,500 for additional works. The total amount included in next year's Estimates for this service represents all that can be usefully spent on the three rivers in the year without further legislation.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888.

MR. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that the Scotch Education Code for 1888 was only laid on the Table of the House on the 6th of March, that it was distributed to Members on the 20th of March, and was, therefore, not received by any of the important School Boards in Scotland until the 21st of March, he would, in view of the fact that the only day after the Easter holidays when the subject of the Code could be discussed would be the first day after the House met, postpone the date of its coming into force from the 6th to the 13th of April?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had received very short Notice of the Question, and had not an opportunity of communicating with the Department; but he would endeavour to give effect to the wish expressed in the Question; and he had very little doubt, unless there was some overwhelming Departmental difficulty, that the Code would not come into operation till the 13th of April. He would do all he could in the matter.

MR. SINCLAIR said, there was not only the question of the Code coming into operation, but there was also the question of raising a discussion in the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH pointed out that if the Code did not come into operation till the 13th there would be the greater interval during which to find an opportunity for discussion.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Bill would be distributed to-morrow morning?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) replied in the affirmative. He had thought it would be convenient for those hon. Gentlemen who intended leaving town before the Bill could be distributed in ordinary course that they should be able to get copies before the usual time of distribution. He had made arrangements for a limited number of Bills to be in the Vote Office before the Sitting closed this evening.

ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) wished to ask a Question of the First Lord of the Treasury as to the course of Business after the Recess. It had been stated that on the Thursday Civil Service Votes and ordinary Motions in Supply would be taken; but he should like to be informed concerning the Business that would be taken on Monday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, that the right hon. Gentleman was quite accurate as to his forecast as to Thursday, and the Government hoped to be able to make progress in Supply on that day and Friday. He would, however, state positively to-morrow whether any Business but Supply would be taken on Monday.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked whether the Vote for the Admiralty Buildings would be taken on Thursday after the House re-assembled?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government proposed to defer that particular Vote. It would not be taken without sufficient Notice.

In reply to Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it would not be possible to take the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill until after the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill had been read a second time.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked what Business would be taken to-morrow?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We hope to move one or two unimportant Bills a stage; but the particular Business will be the Adjournment.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he proposed to take the Land Law (Ireland) (Land Commission) Bill on the Friday night after the Recess; and if he intended to make any statement concerning it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he did propose to do so, and also to make an explanatory statement; and if the House would allow him, he saw no reason why it should not be made after 12 o'clock.

POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION—THE SOUTH AFRICAN COLONIES.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Postmaster General, If there was any probability of the South African Colonies coming into the Postal Union?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, he was afraid he could not hold out any hopes in that direction. The South African Colonies had been occasionally sounded on the subject; but at present they did not see their way to joining.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

WAYS AND MEANS — FINANCIAL STATEMENT.—COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Courtney, in rising to make the usual Financial Statement of the year, I feel that I have need of the special indulgence of the House, because, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I stand in a somewhat exceptional position this year through the introduction of the Local Government Bill. Generally it falls to the lot of the Chancellor of the Exchequer simply to have to consider the claims of the taxpayers where there is an opportunity for remission of taxation; but upon this occasion the claims of the ratepayers have also to be considered; and I find that I have—if I may use the phrase—a double set of clients—namely, the taxpayers and the ratepayers. I do not believe there is any antagonism of interest between the two.

Most of the taxpayers are ratepayers, and most of the ratepayers are taxpayers, so I hope that there will be no jealousy with regard to the relief which may be extended to either the one or the other of those two classes who contribute equally to public purposes, although the one class contribute to the Imperial and the other to the local purse. The ground over which I shall have to travel is wider, therefore, than it usually is; and I trust that on that account the Committee will permit me to pass, perhaps with more rapidity than in an ordinary year, over some of the details which it is customary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to submit on these occasions.

I commence, as usual, with making a statement in regard to the Expenditure of the past year, or rather the present year. And here I must certainly say that we are placed at some disadvantage, because the Financial Statement has to be made a week before the conclusion of the financial year. I shall give the best estimate I can with regard both to the Revenue and the Expenditure of the year, and the Civil servants who deal with these matters are so experienced that I doubt whether there will be much difference between the figures which I shall lay before the Committee and the final figures which will be submitted to Parliament. But it must be remembered that the figures, which I now give, are, as regards the last week of the financial year, an estimate only.

I take first the Exchequer issues for Expenditure, and hon. Members will be able to compare them with the Estimates, if they will look to page 2 of the Papers issued on this occasion. The total Exchequer issues will be £27,972,000 under the head of Consolidated Fund Charges, or an excess of about £44,000 over the Estimate. This excess is due to an issue somewhat beyond what we put down for the year for the Localization of the Forces Fund. It is not an extra expenditure, but rather an anticipation of what, in the ordinary course, would have been spent in 1888-9, and it is a not unsatisfactory item, because it brings our outlay for this purpose practically to an end.

I will now go through the various items of Supply. The Army expenditure will be £18,167,000, as compared with the total Estimate of £18,394,000,

showing a saving of £227,000. The Navy issues will be £12,326,000, showing a saving of £151,000. The Civil Service Miscellaneous issues will be £18,210,000, showing a saving of £52,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £241,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure, including the Supplementary Estimates. The expenditure of the Post Office will be £5,403,000, showing a saving of £18,000. The expenditure of the Telegraph Service will be £1,940,000, showing a saving of £10,000. The Packet Service issues will be £698,000, showing a saving of £1,000. For the Customs and Inland Revenue the amount will be £2,708,000, showing a saving of £8,000. For the total Supply Services the amount is £59,452,000, showing a saving of £457,000 as compared with the Budget Estimate, and of £656,000 as compared with the total estimated Expenditure. The total Expenditure is £87,424,000, showing a saving, as compared with the Budget Estimate, of £423,000.

I trust that these figures will not be unsatisfactory to the Committee. I have several remarks to make with regard to them. I do not propose to go into detail with respect to the savings which we have secured. I may state, with regard to the Consolidated Fund Services, that there has been a saving of about £100,000 in the interest of the Unfunded Debt, which saving, of course, has gone to diminish the Funded Debt, being employed as so much more money to pay off that Debt. This has been partly due to the low rate of interest on Treasury and Exchequer Bills, the average of which has been £2 5s. 11d.; but there has also been a saving of £15,000 to which I should like to allude. It is a saving which I have secured by watching more closely the balances at the Bank of England than has hitherto been done. I have not thought it necessary always to renew Treasury Bills on the day when they expired; but I have looked at the needs of the Treasury for the next week or month, and in that way I have kept down the balance at the Bank of England, and the result has been that I have been able to save £15,000, an amount which again goes to the credit of the Sinking Fund. In the next place, I wish to call attention to the fact that there have been no Supplemental Esti-

mates this year for the Army and Navy; and in no year since 1870 have there not been Supplemental Estimates or Votes of Credit for the Navy or the Army, or generally for both. I trust that in view of the constant charges, which are levelled at the great spending Departments, of extravagance, and sometimes of maladministration, I may point to the fact that my two right hon. Friends at the head of those two Departments have this year, for the first time for many years, been able to keep down the expenditure to that which Parliament intended should be spent, and to exercise such a control that there have been none of those Supplementary Estimates which destroy the confidence of Parliament in the preparation of Estimates, and which also destroy the chances of the Chancellor of the Exchequer submitting a successful Budget. Again, I have to say there have been no Supplemental Estimates for the Revenue Departments. This has not happened for the last 20 years. And, again, the Supplemental Estimates for the Civil Services have been lower than in any other year for 20 years, except last year. They have been only £208,000; last year they were £165,000. Of course, I do not include in Supplemental Estimates the grant in aid of roads. I am speaking of Supplemental Estimates in the ordinary sense, which are in excess of the sums voted by Parliament. To sum up, we have spent £423,000 less than the original Estimates, and £612,000 less than our original and Supplementary Estimates taken together.

I now pass to the consideration of the Revenue, and again I am able to submit a fairly satisfactory account to the Committee. I presume that the Committee will wish to have each separate head of Revenue. The revenue from Customs—and here again I may remind the Committee that the revenue for one week is only an estimate—the revenue from Customs is £19,630,000, or £30,000 more than the Estimate; but it is considerably less than the receipts of last year, owing to the reduction of the Tobacco Duty. The receipts from Excise are £25,597,000, or an excess of £305,000 over the Estimate. The Stamps amount to £12,940,000, showing an increase, on which I shall presently dilate, of £1,182,000. The Land Tax amounts to £1,050,000, showing a deficiency of £15,000. The House Duty

amounts to £1,890,000, showing a deficiency of £30,000; and the Income Tax is £14,340,000, or exactly the sum which it was estimated to produce. That amount may be varied slightly in the coming week; but if there is any change it will be that it will realize somewhat more than the Estimate. The total produce of taxes is thus £75,447,000, showing an excess over our Estimates of £1,472,000. Post Office receipts are £8,650,000, showing an increase of £50,000; Telegraph Service, £1,950,000, which is the exact estimate; Crown Lands are £390,000, or an excess of £20,000; Interest on advances for local works and purchase money of Suez Canal is £242,000, an excess of £2,000; Miscellaneous revenue is £2,910,000, showing a decrease, as compared with the Estimate, of £90,000. The total Non-Tax Revenue is £14,142,000, and is £18,000 less than the Estimate. The total Revenue is £89,589,000, being £1,454,000 more than the estimated Budget receipts.

The Committee will wish to have some little information with regard to some of the items of increase. The total Estimate of Customs was £19,600,000, and the receipts I put down at £19,630,000. This is a remarkably close estimate, looking at the enormous sum involved. And, pointing to that, I must allude to the great loss which the State has sustained in the death of Mr. Seldon, who was a most accomplished statistician, an authority on Customs, and most conversant with these matters, and who has guided, and well guided, many Chancellors of the Exchequer in succession. I am glad to recognize, and I think it right that Parliament and the country should recognize, the services of our Civil servants in the great Departments who are performing their work in comparative obscurity. It is a subject on which I always feel strongly, and it is for that reason that I call attention to the matter, and wish to pay a tribute to the memory of one who served us well. It is right that the little-noticed work of the Civil Service should not be forgotten or undervalued. Four men of equal ability leave the University at one time. One man becomes a Bishop, another a Judge, another a Member of Parliament, and perhaps a Minister, and the fourth becomes, in the capacity of a permanent Civil servant, the mainstay, perhaps the head, of a Department of the State. He

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enjoys less fame and less remuneration than any of the others. That is all the more reason why, where there is merit and ability on the part of a Civil servant similar to that which is displayed in other careers in life, that merit and ability should be gratefully recognized by his countrymen.

Now, I will say a very few words with regard to the smaller differences in the Customs revenue. Coffee and its two satellites, chicory and cocoa, never show any remarkable eccentricities. They seldom increase the Revenue beyond the Estimate. They are dull items, and there is no elasticity in them whatever. Tea is fairly, though not remarkably, progressive. In 1886-7 the receipts from tea were £4,515,000, and in 1887-8 they were £4,618,000, or an increase of £103,000. This is somewhat more than in proportion to the increase in the population; but I cannot say that it is a revenue which shows much elasticity. With regard to tobacco, where a reduction in the duty took place last year, the estimated reduction of receipts was £515,000; but it has actually been £595,000, an excess over our estimated loss of £80,000. That loss has not been due so much to any miscalculation of the Customs or Inland Revenue, as to the fact that very considerable delay took place in the voting of the Budget last year; and, consequently, the Watering Clauses, which prevent an excess of water being put into tobacco, did not come into operation till a later period of the year than we reckoned for. When they did come into operation, they considerably increased the consumption of tobacco—that is to say, the individual smoker smoked more tobacco and less water in every pipe he consumed. Since the 1st of August there is a gratifying increase in the amount of unmanufactured tobacco cleared of 26,900,000 lbs. weight as against 25,900,000 lbs. in the corresponding period of the previous year, being an increase of 1,000,000 lbs. Our calculations, therefore, are beginning to be justified. The House will remember that I defended the reduction of the Tobacco Duty on the ground that extra duty had checked consumption. Just before the duty was raised in 1877 the consumption was 1·49 lbs. per head per annum. In 1882 it had fallen to 1·12 lbs. per head, and it continued at

about that point till last year. But in the last five months of last year, when the Watering Clauses and the reduction of duty came together into operation, the consumption went back to where it stood before the duty was raised, and it stands now at 1·49 lbs. per head per annum.

The last heads of Customs and Revenue to which I need refer are spirits and wine. I must take these in connection with home-made spirits and beer, and treat them under the general head of drink revenue. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) called special attention to the falling-off in the revenue under this head some time ago. In 1876-7 the revenue was £30,909,000; in the year 1887-8, which we have just concluded, it was £27,013,000, showing a fall of no less than £3,866,000. I do not know whether it will be satisfactory to the Committee—it depends whether they look at the question as moralists or as financiers—to know that that decline in the revenue from drink has been arrested during the last year. For the first time for many years, there has not been a decline in the revenue from drink—[“The Jubilee!”] There has been an increase—a very considerable increase—in the amount derived from beer; and I am credibly informed, and I think that an hon. Member behind me has anticipated the explanation, that the great loyal demonstration of last year, and the festivities connected with it, did lead to an increased consumption of beer. In the summer months of last year the revenue from beer showed a very great elasticity, and it amounted for the whole year to £8,710,000, the largest sum ever realized under this head. Throughout the year foreign spirits were stationary. In home spirits the consumption increased, as compared with the Estimate, by £170,000. Wine only fell off £28,000, whereas we had calculated upon a loss of £100,000. On the whole, there is an increase of £300,000 over the Estimate on account of the revenue from drink.

This is, perhaps, a proper point in my Statement to remind the Committee that consumable articles generally no longer yield to the Revenue what they did. In 1876-7 taxes on consumable articles yielded £1 6s. 1d. per head; whereas in 1837-8 they yielded only £1 2s. 3d. per head. Thus that por-

tion of the Revenue to which the great consuming classes chiefly contribute is a halting and an inelastic Revenue. But in contrast to the consumable articles stands the next great item of Revenue—namely, Stamps. I call the special attention of the Committee to this subject. Stamps have produced in the present year under their two great heads of Death Duties and general stamps—£8,160,000 from Death Duties, and £4,780,000 under the head of general stamps; being a total of £12,940,000, or £1,160,000 more than last year. Now, this large item of Revenue is contributed mainly by the well-to-do classes; and I must say that the whole of the area which is covered by the Stamp Duties constitutes a very promising field for the fiscal reaper. We have had a very good crop from it this last year; and I am not sure that the crop has reached its maximum, and that further revenue may not be derived from that source.

I cannot pass away from this subject without saying one word about the yield of the Probate Duty, which has shown such extraordinary results this year. I may mention that it began to produce those extraordinary results just at the date when, in a premature speech, I declared that the Death Duties yielded a most steady and average revenue. Since then the Probate Duty has heaped coals of fire on my head by pouring unwontedly large sums into the Exchequer. There have fallen in two of the largest estates that have ever had to submit to the tax, both of them amounting to upwards of £3,000,000; and £3,000,000 means a cheque for £90,000. But that will not exhaust the revenue from these estates, because there are Legacy Duties to follow, and which will be paid in the ensuing year. There was also a third estate of £1,800,000. While there have been these three windfalls—and I wish the Committee to consider them as windfalls—while we have had these three windfalls in the present year, there have been only three estates of £3,000,000 before during the last 20 years. Then, again, we have had a larger number of estates than usual which pay Legacy Duty at the rate of 10 per cent. To sum up, the Probate and Legacy Duties give £7,300,000; the Succession Duty gives only £820,000, and of that £150,000 is contributed by settled personality. This shows how

small a part is played by Succession Duty in the finances of the country. Taking Stamps as a whole, while, of course, it cannot be inferred that this great increase in the revenue is necessarily a proof of growing prosperity, as it includes that which is raised from the Death Duties, yet there has been also a great increase in the revenue from business stamps, properly speaking. There is an increase of £440,000 in general stamps, and that, I think, may be fairly taken as a confirmation of the revival of the trade of which the first symptoms have begun to appear. There has been a distinct increase in business, which is revealed to us in part by the increase in this portion of the Stamp Duties.

Of the Income Tax I cannot speak with any degree of satisfaction. The yield of the tax per penny was £2,000,000 in 1884-5; £1,980,000 in the year following; £1,960,000 in 1886-7; and it is £1,955,000 in 1887-8. Thus, since 1884-5, there has been a small decrease from year to year in the yield of the penny, instead of an increase, as might have been hoped. Hon. Members will remember that the Income Tax is affected not only by the business of the year, but by that of preceding years, because the average of three years is taken in calculating business profits, and we have been passing through a cycle of unsatisfactory years. With reviving trade we may look for some little improvement; but when I come to estimate the Revenue for next year it will be impossible to hope for any large increase of revenue from this source.

I will now sum up the results for the present year. The actual Revenue is £89,589,000; the Estimate was £88,135,000; so that the excess over the Estimate is £1,454,000. The saving on Expenditure was £422,000; the surplus for which I estimated was £289,000; and I am, therefore, able to lay before the Committee a realized surplus for the year 1887-8 of £2,165,000, the largest since 1873-4.

May I pause for a moment to examine the effect of these satisfactory results upon our balances? I began the year with a balance of £5,950,000, and I leave off with a balance of £7,438,000—an increase of £1,488,000. It is always necessary, at this time of the year, to have a large balance in hand, looking to the dividends payable

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in April; and I have a special reason, which the Committee can readily understand, for desiring to have a very handsome balance on March the 31st this year, in order that I may be comfortably prepared to hand over their sovereigns to any holders of the New Threes who may prefer to ask for £100 in money rather than to take new Stock, which now stands at £100½. It is well to have a strong balance to be able to meet such demands as may be made upon us.

I will now show the effect of the year's finance upon the Debt; but before doing so I must pause for a moment here to revert to a somewhat technical and dry subject—namely, the Local Loans Debt and the Local Loans Fund which I established last year. According to the system which I then ventured to inaugurate, a special account was to be kept of what may be called the Reproductive Debt of the country. It is money lent out to Local Authorities, against which the country receives as income the interest which is paid by the Local Authorities. There will now be presented to Parliament, for the first time, a clear account showing how much is loaned, what is outstanding, what each loan costs us, what we shall receive in return, and what additional sums we have lent in the course of the year. There will be a capital account and a revenue account. The capital account will show that the National Debt Commissioners have lent during this year £3,206,000, and that they have received in repayment £1,906,000, so that there is a balance of £1,300,000 of new advances. According to the system which we inaugurated, there will be issued new Local Loan Stock against this sum. Hon. Members will see that they will now be able to watch from year to year how much we lend to Local Authorities and how much we receive from them. We have not yet been able to make up our final statement, because we have felt it our duty to see what bad debts have been incurred in the course of the present year. This is a contingency we ought always to remember, and which ought always to be brought home to Parliament. I cannot help thinking that we have in the past too much encouraged the idea that if there is a margin between the rate of interest at which we lend and the rate of interest we receive, the trans-

actions are necessarily profitable. I now come to the Revenue account. We have received as interest on loans £1,258,000; we have paid as interest on Local Loans Stock and on Short Loans £1,033,000; and that shows a surplus of £225,000, which is to be charged with that restitution annuity of £130,000 which was established by the Local Loans Bill—an annuity which is to restore the arrears which were lost before these transactions began. In former years, the Committee will remember, £4,000,000 had been lost by bad debts, and before we can say that this banking business, as we may call it, is remunerative, we must restore, even if it be by degrees, the £4,000,000 we have lost. The figures leave a surplus of £95,000, but from that the expense of the lending departments ought to be deducted; and that leaves a balance of about £50,000, for what may be practically regarded as a Sinking Fund, against which we have to set off some bad debts incurred in the year. I am not aware of any large amounts, but there are one or two small amounts, and a Vote will have to be taken to wipe them out. In that way it will be brought home to the House where the money is lost, how it is lost, and through what means it is lost.

At present it will be more interesting to show what we have been doing with the National Debt. Including the increase in our balances of £1,488,000, which is equivalent to a reduction of Debt, we have diminished our liabilities during the year by no less a sum than £7,601,000. But it is more to the point, perhaps, in judging of a particular year, to know how much money belonging to the year 1887-8, the current year, has been, or will be, appropriated to the reduction of the Debt. Hon. Members will remember the complaints that were made against me last year, when I introduced my Budget, that I had been content with a smaller sum than I ought to have taken for reducing the National Debt, and it was said that the result in paying off the Debt would consequently be unsatisfactory. At all events, I either have paid off or shall pay off, with moneys actually belonging to this year, £7,293,000—the largest sum that has ever been paid off out of the moneys of a single year since 1872-3.

What, then, are the main features of the past year? For the first time since 1870, there have been no Supplementary

Estimates or Votes of Credit either for Army or Navy. For the first time since 1869 there have been no Supplementary Estimates for the Revenue Departments. There have been smaller Supplementary Estimates for Civil Services than for 20 years past, excepting last year. We have a larger surplus, a larger balance at the end of the year, and we have paid off more Debt than in any year since 1872-3. I trust the Committee will consider that this is not an unsatisfactory balance sheet to submit to the country. I know how small a portion of the savings effected is due to the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. The greater portion of the credit must be given to the Departments that have so well used the money entrusted to them by Parliament. I am also thankful—and as Chancellor of the Exchequer I say this—not as a Member of the Cabinet—I am especially grateful to the Foreign Minister that we have been able to keep out of those petty wars which break in so unexpectedly sometimes upon the assets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which upset his best calculations and destroy his most sanguine hopes.

I now pass to the coming year, and I have to deal, in the first place, with the Estimates of Expenditure. These are mostly known to the Committee; but perhaps it may be for the convenience of hon. Members that I should read them out in order to bring them within one focus.

Upon the Consolidated Fund Charges we estimate the expenditure at £27,861,000. The Army, £16,700,000; Ordnance Factories, £30,000; the Navy, £13,083,000; Civil Services, £18,145,000; Customs and Inland Revenue, £2,746,000; Post Office, £5,667,000; Telegraph Service, £2,037,000; Packet Service, £641,000—total, £59,049,000. The total Expenditure, therefore, is estimated—if you add these figures together—at £86,910,000, or a diminution of £514,000 as compared with the actual Expenditure of the present year. I do not think I need comment on any of the increases or decreases in the Services, as those will be discussed in connection with the various Estimates when they are proposed to the House, and I have so much work before me that I do not think it is worth while to venture into the subject. I will only point out that the

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increase in the Revenue Departments, £38,000, is due entirely to the fact that the triennial valuation that has to be made increases the cost of the Inland Revenue Department. For Post Office and Telegraphs there is an increase of £361,000, which is largely due to sites for new buildings necessitated by the extension of the Parcel Post system. I regret to say that in our Estimates of Revenue we have not been able to increase the Post Office revenue by the same amount as the expenditure. That is not satisfactory to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I commend it to the attention of those hon. Members who think that the Post Office is a Department which is always giving a growing surplus, and on which constant new demands, therefore, may safely be made.

Now, Mr. Courtney, having dealt with the Expenditure, and before I pass to the Revenue of the coming year, I wish to refer to two other matters which more or less touch Expenditure. The one is the Imperial Defence Bill—the proposals made by my right hon. Friends the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War in connection with the defences of the Kingdom and the Colonies. They have already stated the main outlines of their scheme, and they have informed the House that the money required for it would be raised, as the money for the localization of the Forces was raised, by temporary loans. They did not, however, state any details. In the case of the Navy, the money will be borrowed and repaid by an annuity running for 10 years, charged against the Navy Estimates every year. There will be no material charge until the year 1889. The Committee may remember that the ships are to be at the absolute disposal of the Admiralty at the end of the 10 years. By the end of the 10 years this annuity will cease, and the whole amount will be paid off. There will thus be an annuity on the Navy Estimates for 10 years; but against that there will be received £35,000 from the Colonies in respect of the ships, and the sum of £91,000 annually to equip and maintain these ships. Thus there will be a set-off to the Navy Estimates in respect of these ships. The clause will be as follows:—

“The Treasury shall from time to time issue out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or the growing produce thereof, such sums, not ex-

ceeding in the whole the sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, as may be required by the Admiralty for the purpose of building, arming, and completing for sea the vessels mentioned in articles six and seven of the Australasian Agreement.

"The sums so issued shall be treated as an advance, and shall be repaid to the Consolidated Fund out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for naval services by an annuity of such amount as will repay the same, with interest at three per cent per annum, within twelve years from the end of the financial year in which the first of the said sums was issued.

"All sums received from the Governments of the Australasian Colonies in pursuance of the Australasian Agreement in respect of the annual sum either of thirty-five thousand pounds or of ninety-one thousand pounds mentioned in article seven of the agreement, shall be applied, under the directions of the Treasury, as an appropriation in aid of naval expenditure."

Thus it will be seen that no permanent addition, but only a slight temporary addition, will be made to our expenditure by these proposals, and that even this slight addition will have something to counterbalance it. I may here say that it is extremely important to everybody to embody this arrangement in an Act, because the Colonial Parliaments have passed Acts to carry out their part of the arrangement; and it seems right that the Imperial Parliament should not leave this money to be voted year by year, but that once for all the expenditure should be sanctioned for carrying out our part of the bargain, which we believe is satisfactory from a pecuniary point of view, and also very decidedly from the Imperial point of view, as establishing the principle that the Colonies should assist very materially in the general naval defence of the Empire. In the case of the Army requirements, the interest on the money borrowed will be provided for in the Army Estimates; but means have to be provided for paying off the capital. Now, I lay down this doctrine, which will be, I am sure, endorsed by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite and by the House generally, that this money should be borrowed for a term which is shorter than the probable duration of the works which are to be executed by means of this expenditure. It ought to be borrowed and paid off within a reasonably short time.

Now, I will submit to the House how I propose to do it. There is one national asset which has never yet been brought into account at its real value, and I do not believe there are 20 Gentlemen in this House, apart from those who had

something to do with the transaction at the time, who are aware of the real value of that asset. I am referring to the asset which we possess in the 176,000 shares we hold in the Suez Canal. Now, the position as to those shares, at present, is as follows:—£4,000,000 was raised to pay for these shares; but, inasmuch as we were to draw no dividends in respect of them till 1894, we receive an annual payment up to 1894 from Egypt of £200,000, or 5 per cent, on the £4,000,000, 3½ per cent of which goes to pay the interest, while 1½ is treated as a Sinking Fund. The £4,000,000 has by this time been reduced to £3,200,000. The shares, on the other hand, which are £20 shares, and which, when they were bought, were worth about £27, yielding a dividend of 5 per cent on their par value, are now worth £84 each, and yield about 15 per cent on their par value. We shall come into a revenue of £570,000 per annum on these shares from 1894, unless there should be any fall in the revenue of the Canal, a contingency which we do not anticipate. At all events, we anticipate that instead of receiving £200,000 a-year, as at present, we shall, after 1894, be in receipt of a revenue of £570,000 a-year. I do not think I stated just now that the actuarial value of the shares at the present moment is £10,500,000—a comfortable nest-egg, I think I may say, and some set-off against the expenditure which has been incurred in connection with Egypt. Now, let the Committee realize how we stand at the present moment. We have this debt, £3,200,000, and we are receiving towards the liquidation of it £200,000 a-year. What I wish to submit to the Committee is this—that we should destroy and put an end to the present artificial system, to this debt on which we are paying 3½ per cent—that we should pay that off, except as much as will be paid off before 1894 by the £200,000 a-year, so that we shall have, when 1894 arrives, this whole asset of the Suez Canal shares clear of all liability whatever, and giving us a revenue of £570,000 a-year. I propose to utilize that revenue for the purpose of discharging the new debt of £2,300,000 which is required for the fortification of the ports and coaling stations. Its amount will be £2,300,000, and it will be seen that in four years or four and a-half years after 1894 the Exche-

quor Bills or Bonds raised to provide that sum will be paid off out of this revenue, which is at present totally unpledged, and we shall be able to raise this loan, and wipe it out entirely, without placing any burden whatever upon the taxpayers. We shall simply make use of the dividends of the Suez Canal shares for four and a-half years after we begin to receive them to pay off a loan incurred for the defence of the Empire. I trust these proposals will, when examined—and, of course, they must be carefully examined—commend themselves to the Committee; but I think, at all events, I carry out in these proposals my promise that the loan should be paid off very quickly and on very short terms, for the first moneys issued would begin to be paid off in 1894-5, six years hence, and all would be paid off within 10 years, and possibly within even a shorter time.

There is another expense which hon. Members may think might encumber the Revenue of the coming year—namely, the expense connected with the Conversion Scheme which I have submitted to the House. Now, I distinguish for a moment between the expenses proper—I mean the agency commission, bank charges, and matters of that kind—and the 5s. bonus which is to be given to holders of Consols and Reduced who accept our terms. I propose to charge these first-mentioned expenses against the first economies on interest which we shall receive, and which will begin on the 1st of April in the year after this. With regard to the bonus, had the bonus been larger, it would, of course, have been treated as an addition to the capital of the Funded Debt; but being so small in amount, at the outside £980,000, it will be paid in cash, and therefore any addition to the Funded Debt will be avoided. From whatever source, however, the money may be taken, and whatever liability the bonus may involve, very nearly an equal sum has already been secured as a set-off by a further operation preparatory to and connected with the Conversion Scheme—that is to say, there is what again I will call a nest-egg which has not been taken into account, and which may amount to nearly £1,000,000; that is the premium or additional value on the Local Loan Stock, whether realized or not realized, at this moment. There has already been noted in respect of the issue of

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Local Loan Stock the sum of £150,000. There is still £18,000,000 of the Stock in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, on which, if you put the premium at 4 per cent, which is a very moderate estimate as compared with the price of Consols, you get £720,000, or, in all, £870,000. However that profit may be treated, I wish to show that by the issue of this Local Loans Stock, which stands at a premium, you have got an asset of about equal value as a set-off against the 5s. bonus which may be granted to the holders of Consols and Reduced. No addition to our liabilities will have been made. If the whole profit arising from the issue of Local Loans Stock were left in the hands of the Saving Banks Trustees, their position would be so strengthened that it might no longer be necessary to retain the annuity of £83,000 to make up the deficiency on the Savings Banks. Accordingly, we should have so much more for the reduction of our general expenditure. I will not elaborate the point; but I wish to show the Committee that, through the operation of the issue of Stock at a premium, you will have an asset of about equal amount to set against the liability in respect of the 5s. per cent bonus. [Mr. CHILDERS: Hear, hear!] If my right hon. Friend does not follow me, I am sure there is no one in the House who will be able to do so. I am afraid I am wearying the patience of the Committee by the slow rate at which I am getting on with my story; but I trust that I shall be able now to travel somewhat faster over the ground.

Now, having shown the total Expenditure to the Committee, I come to the interesting point of the estimated Revenue of the coming year. I will give the totals first, without going into details. I estimate the Customs at £19,800,000, or £170,000 more than the receipts of the current year; Excise at £25,560,000, less by £37,000 than the receipts of the present year; Stamps at £12,740,000, or £200,000 less; Land Tax, £1,046,000, less by £4,000; House Duty, £1,890,000, the same as the present year; Income Tax, £13,820,000, or £520,000 less, owing, of course, to the fact that the arrears will be taken at 7d. instead of 8d. That gives a total produce of taxes of £74,856,000, showing a decrease of £591,000 as compared with the current

year. The Post Office revenue I place at £8,800,000, or £150,000 more than this year; Telegraph Service, £2,000,000, or an increase of £50,000; Crown Lands, £390,000, the same as this year; Interest on the purchase of the Suez Canal shares, £241,000, which is about £1,000 less than this year; Miscellaneous, £3,000,000, an increase of £90,000; the total produce of the Non-Tax Revenue thus being £14,431,000, or an increase of £289,000. The total Revenue is, therefore, £89,287,000, or £302,000 less than in the current year. I do not think that the Committee will be surprised that the total estimated Revenue is placed at a lower figure than in the actual year, because, though there is some improvement in trade, it has certainly not yet developed to such an extent that a prudent Chancellor of the Exchequer would wish to swell his Estimates on the faith of it. The only items of substantial increase in the produce of taxes are under the head of Customs—namely, in respect of tobacco and of tea. I estimate £130,000 more for tobacco and £82,000 more for tea. I rely on it that the consumption of tobacco will be stimulated by the fact that the Watering Clauses will come into full effect in the ensuing year; and in tea I allow for the ordinary increase which has been justified by previous years. On the other items, except spirits, of which I have not yet spoken, there is no increase or decrease. With respect to the drink revenue, though there has been no decrease in the year just about to end, I am not prepared to say that the downward movement has been permanently arrested. I estimate £30,000 less for home-made spirits, and £30,000 less for foreign spirits. Beer I put at the same figure as last year. The past year was Leap Year, which gave an additional day in which to consume beer, and it was also, as I have said, the Jubilee year. Against that we have the ordinary increase of population, and I think it is a safe estimate to take beer at the same figure as before; but I do not think I should be justified in increasing the estimate. With regard to Stamps, I take off £320,000 from the Death Duties, in view of the abnormal produce of the Probate Duty in the present year. But, on the other hand, I allow for an

increase of £120,000 in general stamps, which, it seems to me, is a fair and moderate increase to take—less, I think, than the normal increase; and the general effect is that under the head of stamps generally I allow for a net decrease of £200,000. Licences, Land Tax, and House Duty are practically unchanged. I need not say more in regard to the Income Tax than I have already explained to the Committee. The diminution will be £520,000; but that is due to the fact that the arrears last year were taken at 8*d.*, while this year they will be taken at 7*d.* The new valuation on Schedule A, which is going to take place this year, will somewhat increase the revenue from Income Tax as regards house property; but I must set that off against the probability that there will be a reduction with regard to landed property, and so I allow for a total diminution of £520,000.

To sum up the Revenue for the coming year, there is an estimated improvement on Customs of £170,000, against a loss on receipts from other taxes of £761,000; therefore the tax estimate is worse by £591,000. On the other side, there is an expected improvement in non-tax receipts of £289,000. The total receipts in 1887-8 were £89,589,000; I estimate for 1888-9, £89,287,000, showing a decrease of £302,000. On the other hand, if hon. Members will carry their minds back, there is also a decrease in Expenditure of £514,000. I am now able, therefore, to come to my estimated balance for the coming year on the existing basis of taxation. I do not think I need read the figures over again. The total taxes are £74,856,000; the total Non-Tax Revenue is £14,431,000, making together £89,287,000. The total Expenditure is £86,910,000, showing a surplus on the existing basis of taxation of £2,377,000.

And now, Mr. Courtney, I come to a part of my Statement which may be of more interest to hon. Members than the accounts of last year, or even of the coming year on the existing basis of taxation, for they will be more interested to know what the result of the National Balance Sheet will be on the future basis of taxation in connection with the changes which we propose to introduce. And here, Mr. Courtney, I am placed in a somewhat unpleasant position—

namely, that, having a satisfactory balance of £2,377,000 to dispose of, I see havoc and devastation wrought upon that balance by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). There are many schemes of relief from taxation which I would most gladly have undertaken; but the claims of my right hon. Friend's clients, the ratepayers, endorsed as they have been by successive Parliaments for many years past, it has been impossible to ignore; and, consequently, I have now for a short time to abandon my position as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to place before the Committee some information with regard to the Local Budget, or rather—I say it to my own distress, and I fear to the distress of those who have to listen to me—to two Local Budgets, because we have to make both a provisional arrangement for the coming financial year, and a permanent arrangement which will take effect when the Local Authorities have come into power after their election on the 1st of April, 1889. I may have to travel over some ground which has already been travelled over by my right hon. Friend; but, perhaps, it will be agreeable to the Committee to hear how we shall stand as regards local finances in somewhat more detail.

Now, first as to the permanent plan, which is to come into operation on the 1st of April, 1889, after the new authorities are in power. Under it we begin our re-adjustment of Imperial and Local Taxation by taking away from the localities grants in aid amounting to £2,600,000. We shall remove this charge entirely from the Imperial Budget. I am sure most of the Committee and most of my right hon. Friends opposite will agree that it is bad finance to have the same expenditure appearing in two accounts. This £2,600,000—I am speaking, of course, in round numbers—appears in the first instance as Imperial expenditure; and, secondly, it appears again in its proper place as local expenditure, and by adding up both you get a higher figure than the real expenditure, because of this double entry. We propose in future to separate the two entirely. As I was saying, we withdraw from Local Authorities grants amounting to £2,600,000. But, on the other hand, we give up to the County Authorities existing licences bringing in £3,000,000, and

there will be some new licences amounting, in round numbers, to £800,000; or, in all, £3,800,000. The existing licences which we propose to give up are of two kinds. One portion, amounting to £1,400,000, of which publicans' licences form the bulk, will be collected by the County Authorities, and may be increased to a certain limited extent at the discretion of those authorities. The other portion, amounting to about £1,600,000, of which the main items are the dog, gun, and game licences, and the Carriage Tax, will still be collected by the Inland Revenue, and the County Authorities will have no power to increase them, because they are licences which must continue the same over the whole of the United Kingdom. It would not do, for instance, to have one licence tax raised in Norfolk, and another at a different rate raised in Kent, considering how people move to and fro in this country. It would not be fair or practicable to have these licences raised by the counties, and varying in different counties. Consequently, these taxes, although local in their character, will be raised by Imperial agency; but in both cases the counties will receive the proceeds of the licence duties. But with regard to this point I may say there is a clause in the Bill, which hon. Members will see to-morrow, which will clear up any doubts in regard to the manner in which these licences will be localized.

I now come to what may be a more interesting point, and that is the promise of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board that a substantial sum should be contributed from personal property to the relief of local taxation. It has been the dream of reformers of local taxation to make personalty contribute to local expenditure. I understand that many Chancellors of the Exchequer have tried to see whether they could carry out a system of local Income Tax; but I understand that all have broken down. I ought, perhaps, to ask a preliminary question—but I cannot dwell upon the point—to what extent the ratepayers are entitled to the relief which is to be given them? My right hon. Friend did not discuss that subject, and it is so large a one that I think the Committee will excuse me if I do not now go into it. But I must enter a protest against the suggestion which has been put forward

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in some quarters that this relief of local taxation is simply to be a gift to the squirearchy. On the contrary, a very large portion of this relief will go to the poorest ratepayers in some of the poorest towns of the Kingdom. During the whole of the conflict which has raged round this question it has always been maintained that the towns have a ratepayer's grievance as well as the country. There is also this distinction—and it is one for which I have myself strenuously contended—that while a large portion of rates are hereditary burdens, subject to which property has been bought and sold, and which, therefore, should come distinctly from the pockets of the landlord, on the other hand, there has of late years been an enormous increase in the rates which was not foreseen by Parliament, and which, as it results not from the legislation of the past, but of the present, is distinctly not a hereditary burden. It has been imposed by recent Parliaments, and imposed on land and houses alone, to the advantage of personalty, not on any ground of principle, but simply because Parliament has not been able to devise means of making the latter kind of property contribute in any substantial degree, except by the obnoxious system of grants in aid, to local taxation. The situation has thus greatly changed of recent years. Hon. Members will remember that between 1868 and this year rates have risen from between £16,000,000 and £17,000,000 to £26,000,000 or more; and I do not believe that any relief which Parliament would be ready to give, and certainly no relief we shall propose, would be equal to those additional charges which have been placed during the last 25 years upon rateable property. I make this protest against the suggestion that our proposal is one for the relief of hereditary burdens which ought to be borne by the landowner, and here I must make another remark as to that portion of rateable property which consists of land. Land has depreciated enormously in value since former comparisons were made with regard to the contributions of real and personal property. Those comparisons were made when rates were lower and land more valuable, and therefore are not applicable to the situation which exists now. I trust that the relief which we are giving, and which will go in part to the towns and in part to the counties, will not be represented as

given merely to one interest and one class of property. What we believe we have done in the proposal we have submitted to Parliament is to offer relief to all ratepayers, bearing in mind that Parliament has declared that the time has come when other property should be brought in to assist in bearing the burden that now rests exclusively on land and houses.

Well, then, how is this to be done? How is this contribution from personal property, of which my right hon. Friend spoke, to be effected? I have said that a local Income Tax seemed to be an impossible idea. The next idea, and one which has been a very favourite one, is that you might raise 1*d.*, or any other sum, by the Imperial Income Tax, and then allocate it for local purposes. But I will state what I consider to be a fatal objection to that plan. Income Tax is largely paid in respect of land and houses, the very property upon which those rates chiefly fall which we are anxious to relieve, so that by means of an Income Tax you would be simply taking away with one hand what you were granting with the other. Again, there is another objection to the arrangement by means of Income Tax, and that is that it is largely charged upon earnings, and that it weighs very heavily upon the struggling middleclass, upon whom the rates also fall very heavily. I have a strong opinion that Income Tax falls very severely upon professional men and upon the lower middle class. They, perhaps, feel the burden of taxation as severely as any class of the community; hence the Government are not prepared to propose that relief should be provided out of the Income Tax. What we have rather to look to is to get at realized personalty—personal property which is yielding income, and not personal earnings. Now, there is one tax which falls exclusively on realized personalty, and that is the Probate Duty, and we propose to give up permanently to the Local Authorities one-half of the Probate Duty. That is the manner in which we propose to assist local taxation—through the means of a tax which is distinctly seen to be derived from realized property. I hope that the Committee will understand that if we give half of the Probate Duty to the Local Authorities, we do not intend to take the whole of that half for England alone. Scotland and Ireland must be

considered too. We take the share of England, for reasons I will presently explain, at 80 per cent, or four-fifths, of the Probate Duty. The total for the year 1888-9 is estimated at £4,260,000. Half of that is £2,130,000, and the share of England, or 80 per cent, is £1,704,000. And here I want to point out that an additional advantage of giving a portion of the Probate Duty in relief of local taxation is that this duty is not a stationary but a rising and improving duty. It is but a very few years ago that the duty only amounted to £3,700,000, while last year it was about £1,500,000. Therefore, if local finance shares with Imperial finance in the Probate Duty, there will be this constant hope for the ratepayer—that as personal property increases, the contribution which he will receive will increase in proportion, and he will have a growing participation in the realized wealth of the country.

I can now sum up to the Committee the permanent arrangement which will come into force in April, 1889. It will be this. The licences, both transferred and new, which will be at the disposal of the Local Authorities, will bring in £3,800,000; half of the Probate Duty, £1,700,000—total, £5,500,000; but from this we must take the present grants, amounting to £2,600,000, which will leave a net gain in relief of local taxation of £2,900,000 for England and Wales. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said £3,000,000. If there is any increase whatever in the course of the two years in the Probate Duty the relief will amount to £3,000,000, and the total at the disposal of the Local Authorities will be £5,600,000, for, as I have shown, mine is a minimum estimate.

At this point I must ask the Committee to follow me in a matter which takes me again away for a moment from the Local to the Imperial Budget. The Committee is aware that there has always been a double controversy going on—two parallel and simultaneous grievances with regard to the burdens borne by realty and personalty respectively. The friends of the ratepayer have always complained that personal property did not contribute anything towards local taxation. But, on the other hand, there has been a grievance on the part of the friends of the Imperial taxpayer. They

have said that landed property did not contribute its fair share to Imperial taxation. Now, what is perfectly obvious is that the two questions must be treated together. Both complaints quite possibly may have been true. It may be true, and I believe it was true, that personal property did not contribute its fair share to local taxation—that it contributed scarcely anything. On the other hand, it is equally true that the Death Duties upon land are considerably smaller than those imposed upon personal property. Now, the Committee will see how the situation is varied by the proposal which I make. In future, the Probate Duty on personal property for Imperial purposes will be only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, instead of 3 per cent—but, of course, there will still be the Legacy Duty. The Succession Duty at the present moment for lineals is 1 per cent. Lineals are exempt from the Legacy Duty.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): On the life interest.

MR. GOSCHEN: Lineals pay no Legacy Duty. The matter is extremely complicated; but I think I can satisfy my right hon. Friend. The lineals, in the case of the Succession Duty, pay 1 per cent.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: On the life interest only.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; there is that difference, I admit. But I am not proposing to deal with all the anomalies of the Death Duties. I cannot attempt that task, as a whole, in the present Session. What I was pointing out is this. Perhaps I can best explain it by going back to the proposal of my right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) in 1885. He suggested that the Succession Duty should be raised from 1 per cent to 3 per cent in the case of lineals, in order to put it on a level with the Probate Duty, which was 3 per cent, and which was all (lineals paying no Legacy Duty) that personal property paid when it passed to lineals. Hereafter the Probate Duty will stand at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The amount of the duty remaining for Imperial purposes, when I transfer $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the Local Authorities, will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. As far as Imperial finance is concerned, I cut away $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent from the Probate Duty. Therefore, the difference—of which so much is constantly made—between the Succession Duty and the Pro-

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bate Duty (apart from the question of life interest) will be reduced from 3 per cent, as against 1 per cent, to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, as against 1 per cent; and in order that the grievance may be met, I propose that the Succession Duty shall be raised $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, after which the Succession Duty—that is to say, the Death Duty paid by land—will, in the case of lineals, be $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, just as the Probate Duty, which is the only Death Duty paid by lineals in respect of personalty, will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I spoke of parallel grievances. What I propose is to remove one grievance, that of the local ratepayer, by handing him over a portion of the Imperial Death Duties. Half the Probate Duty is to be paid to the relief of local burdens. It disappears from Imperial taxation, and then, by a slight increase in the Succession Duty, you will have equal rates on the two kinds of property for Imperial purposes. I effect this, in the case of lineals, who pay no Legacy Duty, by adding $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the Succession Duty, and in the case of collaterals, who do pay Legacy Duty, by adding $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the Succession Duty.

But while I take this step to equalize the amount of the contributions of real and personal property, it would not, I think, be fair to insist on a similar method of payment in both cases. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) called attention to one point in which those who pay Succession Duty are at a considerable advantage; but there are others in which they stand at an immense disadvantage. We cannot compare the weight of the duty raised on land with the weight of the duty resting on personal property which can be sold. If that difference ever existed, it exists in tenfold force at the present moment, when it is so difficult to sell land, and when the value of land is so depreciated. I cannot fancy any heavier burden than that now resting, for instance, on the Irish landlord, who cannot sell his estate, who cannot collect his rents, and who, nevertheless, is liable to Succession Duty. While, therefore, I suggest a slight alteration in the amount of the Succession Duty, I also propose to give a somewhat longer time—namely eight, instead of four years—for the payment of the duty. [An hon. MEMBER: He may sell a portion.] I think those who are acquainted with land will know that it is extremely

difficult to sell a portion or corner of an estate in order to realize a certain sum. You cannot separate farm buildings from a farm; you may not be able to get a proper rotation of crops; and there are a hundred circumstances besides, which prevent a man from selling a portion of land in order to meet a special charge. To impose on an heir the necessity of selling part of his land in a hurry is to throw on him a heavy burden; and if, without sinning against any financial canon, we can prevent that, while slightly raising the duty, I think that is a proposal to which no strong objection can be made. The financial effect of the raising of the Succession Duty by $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on lineals, and by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on collaterals, in order to put it on the same footing as the Probate and Legacy Duty, when half the Probate Duty has been handed over, will not be considerable in the coming year. I put it at £50,000; but this, of course, is a source of income which will increase in subsequent years.

Now I must return to the Local Budget. The contributions at present coming to the Imperial Exchequer, and which are hereafter to go to the counties, amount to £5,500,000. The Committee will remember of what this sum consists. I now have to explain to the Committee the distribution both of the licences and of the contribution from the Probate Duty, which will go to the localities. The principle we adopt in the distribution of the portion which comes from the Probate Duty is that it shall be paid to each county according to the proportion which the indoor pauperism of that county bears to the indoor pauperism of the country as a whole. This distribution has been criticized as being unequal. It has been said that it would very much favour London, where the proportion of indoor pauperism is much greater than in any other part of the country. But I particularly ask hon. Members to bear in mind that this distribution must not be taken by itself, but in connection with the surrender of licences and the withdrawal of the Imperial grants. It will probably turn out that the withdrawal from London of the grant for police will more than neutralize any advantage London may get from the distribution of a particular portion of the funds to be given up for local purposes according to indoor pauperism. Every county, every Quar-

ter Sessions borough, every rateable area will get some advantage under my right hon. Friend's (Mr. Ritchie's) Bill; but the distribution must be looked at as a whole, and cannot be judged simply by the allocation of one particular part of the resources to be surrendered. We may look upon the distribution of this half of the Probate Duty as a corrective of the inequality which may arise from the exchange of licences for grants in aid.

There is a proposal that you should give the new money in proportion as counties and boroughs have been in receipt of the old grants. It seems to me that nothing could be more unjust. If there were a great lunatic asylum, in a particular county, receiving a considerable Imperial grant, and if you were to say, "This county has been receiving so much, and practically, as there is more money to be distributed, you must pay in proportion to what it has received hitherto," you would be offending against every principle of justice. You must rather look to see where the shoe pinches most. Now, all grants, as I have explained, will disappear from the National Exchequer. The county will pay them instead of the Exchequer, and these grants will be a first charge on the Revenue given up to the county by the Exchequer. The Revenue so given up will, in the next place, meet the whole cost of the disturnpiked roads, and will pay the 4*d.* per head for every indoor pauper, and what remains over will go to general county purposes. For instance, where there are Quarter Sessions boroughs with their own police, and where the rest of the county has its own police, a certain portion of the new grant will go to the Quarter Sessions, and the remainder will go to the county. It will be distributed first to the widest areas, and will then descend to the narrower areas; so I believe that in the end the county will benefit, the Quarter Sessions boroughs will benefit, and the District Councils will benefit, and the ratepayer, wherever he is paying rates, will find that he has some relief. He will find that he has relief in his poor rate, county rates, general borough rate, and highway rate. I must beg hon. Members to bear all this relief in mind, because, if there are additional licence taxes to be raised, their defence will be in the great amount of the relief to be given in almost every quarter, and which will far outweigh,

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to the vast majority of ratepayers, the burden of these new licences.

I pass now from the permanent to the transitional arrangement, which is rendered necessary by the circumstances of the present year. The County Authorities, to whom the licences are to be handed over, do not yet exist, and we think that to take steps in order to leave them in possession of a balance when they come into office would be a direct incentive to them to begin with extravagance. We propose, therefore, to give only so much this year as can be fairly distributed and spent by existing authorities. What we propose to pay this year, as explained by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), is the 4*d.* per head for every indoor pauper, and a contribution towards the disturnpiked main roads, together with some corresponding relief to the Metropolis and the Quarter Sessions boroughs. For this we propose to give up at once one-third—that is, 1 per cent—of the Probate Duty, and to impose at once for local purposes only, so that they will in no way affect the Budget, the new licences which I have yet to explain. Roughly speaking, 1 per cent of the Probate Duty will almost pay for the indoor paupers, and the new licences will be the contribution in respect of the roads.

Now, the justice of this arrangement will become apparent when I come to the task which my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) has left to me—namely, to describe the new licence duties which are to be levied. Before I mention them I must again entreat the Committee to remember that this is not a question of Imperial taxation or of Imperial relief, or of Imperial contribution, but simply a question between one class of ratepayers and another. What is raised by these taxes will go to the relief of the ratepayers, and to the ratepayers alone. The cardinal point of our idea is to look at the fact that the roads are used gratis now, and that those who use a road contribute nothing to its support except by the highway rate, which falls equally on the whole body of the community. But is it not fair that those who use a road should contribute more than those who do not to the general maintenance of the road? If there are 50 ratepayers, and 40 of them use a road, while 10 of them

use it on horseback or on wheels, is it not fair that the 10 should pay something more as a contribution than the 40? Well, the Carriage Tax is one of those taxes which will be handed over to the Local Authorities, and I will speak of that in a moment. But quite apart from the Carriage Tax, which is a tax mainly on the more luxurious carriages—carriages used for pleasure—there is at present no tax on any other vehicles, however much they may destroy the roads, except omnibuses and a certain number of vehicles which ply for hire. But the heaviest description of vehicles—such as railway vans, coal contractors' carts, and vehicles of that character—[An hon. MEMBER: Brewers?] Yes; brewers' drays are a good instance. These vehicles use up the roads without paying one shilling more than anyone else for their maintenance. Well, we propose to put a duty of £1 a-year upon every vehicle exceeding 10 cwt. in weight, a very moderate limit to take. We propose that duty of £1, but with an exemption, which has always been made in favour of agricultural carts, carts used by farmers for the purposes of husbandry and not for haulage. Those vehicles which are propelled on roads by any other means than by horses will also be included. That is one of the new licences we propose, and I think hon. Members will acknowledge that the principle that all those who use the roads should pay for them, and should pay in some proportion to the wear and tear that they cause, is just. But I have not yet exhausted the subject. We propose, also, to put a very small Wheel Tax upon every vehicle.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Not on carts?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes. We propose a duty of 2s. 6d. per wheel upon all carts over 2 cwt. [Colonel Nolan: Oh!] A two-wheeled cart under this proposal will pay 5s. a-year towards the roads. I must say that I do not think, looking to the advantage of the other ratepayers, who have no carts, that that is an unfair charge. We have put it extremely low—5s. upon a two-wheeled and 10s. upon a four-wheeled cart. Gentlemen's carts and pleasure carriages will continue to pay higher duties—namely, the present Carriage Tax, with such modifications as I

we do think it is fair that those who use the roads should in this slight degree contribute towards their repair. We expect to derive £300,000 from this tax.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): Will the Wheel Tax have to be paid for heavy carts in addition to the £1 duty?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am obliged to my right hon. Friend for the interruption. We think that those heavy carts use the roads to such an extent that they may fairly bear the Wheel Tax of 2s. 6d. a wheel, as well as the duty of £1.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): Will farm waggons have to pay?

MR. GOSCHEN: Those employed in agriculture on farms will be excluded. I hope that hon. Members will see that this tax of £1 10s. on the heaviest carts is not excessive, for they will still be paying less than a brougham with two horses, although causing much more wear and tear to the roads. I have had many suggestions that bicycles and tricycles should be taxed; but I have not come to any conclusion to impose such a tax. I do not say that there is in principle any objection to such a tax, and that a tax on bicycles and tricycles would not form a proper source of revenue; but I do not like to multiply little taxes of this description, and I recognize the great service that has been conferred on a vast number of young men, who, by means of bicycles and tricycles, are enabled to explore the country, so I do not propose to impose such a tax as part of the scheme. At the same time, however, as I have said, I do not think there would be any great objection to such a tax.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland?

MR. GOSCHEN: No, Sir; I do not propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland; but I will deal with that in a moment. I am obliged to the hon. Member for reminding me that I must deal with Ireland. Having got through this first licence tax somewhat better than I expected, I now approach with some trepidation—

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: How much will this tax produce?

MR. GOSCHEN: £150,000.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The two—the Cart Tax and the Wheel Tax?

Mr. GOSCHEN: No; the two will produce £300,000. The tax on the heavy carts, with which there is absolutely no sympathy, as far as I can see, will produce £150,000, and the light vehicles, which are very lightly taxed, and with which there is a great deal of sympathy, will also contribute £150,000, making, in all, £300,000.

I now approach with some trepidation the next licence duty. Many fantastic guesses and reports have been hazarded as to the taxes about to be imposed, and one hon. Member has heard it reported, I believe, that it would be proposed to put a tax on bakers' licences. I should like to see the hon. Member who would venture to get up and propose to put a licence tax on bakers. No; I look to an older friend—to a tax which existed for very many years, and which was then taken off—the duty which used to be imposed upon horses of every kind, and which was repealed in 1871. The old duty was imposed on all horses, whether they were engaged in trade or otherwise, and it was a duty of 10s. 6d. I do not propose to tax what I may call trade horses, or horses used in agriculture; but I do propose, not in order to fill what for the moment I may call my own Exchequer, but, for the purposes of local finance, to impose a tax of £1 on pleasure horses—*[Cries of "Oh!"]* *[An hon. MEMBER: Hobby horses!]* I am afraid there is not the same satisfaction in regard to this £1 duty as in regard to the licence tax on heavy vehicles. Hon. Members will see that I put the cart before the horse. But let me remind hon. Members on whom this tax will fall. It will fall a good deal on what I may term the well-to-do classes. Hon. Members must bear in mind, too, that this tax will go in aid of local rates and towards relieving their constituents from burdens of which they now continually complain, and that it will be a contribution from those who are better able to pay it than the ordinary ratepayers. Then, again, it is an old tax which formerly was put on all horses, but which I now propose only to impose on horses of a certain class. Brood mares and young horses not yet in use will be exempted from the tax entirely; but, on the other hand, racehorses will have to pay a licence tax of £5. Horse dealers will pay a composition duty of £15. This Horse Tax is estimated to produce

£540,000. The Committee will feel that it is impossible for me, in dealing with the multiplicity of subjects to which I have to refer, to justify all my proposals with as much argument as possibly they might require; I must content myself with rapidly and feebly sketching the main arguments in their favour. But I will say this—that it is only right that those who use the roads should pay contributions towards them, and I also think it is right that, in endeavouring to relieve the ratepayers, we should be careful in our re-arrangement to see that the new burdens fall on the shoulders of those who are best able to bear them.

Now, let us see how localities will be benefited in the coming year by the proposed arrangement in England and Wales. The allowance in respect of Probate Duty will amount to £1,136,000, the new Wheel Tax to £300,000, and the Horse Tax to £540,000, making up a total of £1,976,000, or, it may be said in round numbers, £2,000,000. This will be distributed temporarily as follows—this will be the effect this year:—there will be a relief given to the Local Authorities of 4d. for every indoor pauper, which will amount to £1,200,000; then there will be the sum of £520,000 given to County Authorities for main roads; and, lastly, there will be the grant to the Metropolis and boroughs of about £250,000 for their roads and streets. I ought to add that I propose to introduce the Horse Tax and the Wheel Tax in a separate Bill, because they do not really affect the Imperial Budget at all. It would be un-Constitutional, I think, to have introduced these taxes in the Bill of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie), otherwise I would have had the greatest pleasure in allowing him to deal with them in that measure. When the time comes and we proceed to business, and this Bill is before the House, it will be for the ratepayers and the ratepayers' friends to fight it out with those who may not be so enamoured of these new licence taxes. They will not affect the Imperial Revenue, but I believe them to be just taxes, and that the ratepayers will find them to afford an equitable arrangement.

And now I must state how Scotland and Ireland will be affected. The Committee will observe that we surrender

from the Imperial Exchequer one-third of the Probate Duty—and by Probate Duty Scotch Members will understand me as including inventory duty. Now the question arises on what principle this ought to be distributed between the three countries—whether this surrender in respect of Probate Duty ought to be based or not on the locality where the duty is paid? [Colonel NOLAN: No, no!] An hon. Member from Ireland interrupts me with what I was going to say. I recognize that it would be unjust to Ireland to deal with it in that manner; and as I am always anxious, apart from political differences which separate us here from many of the Irish Members, to do full justice to Ireland from a fiscal point of view, I have examined this matter with peculiar care. I find that of the Probate Duty 85 per cent is paid in England, 10 per cent in Scotland, and 5 per cent in Ireland; and, therefore, if we proceeded on the principle of handing back to the countries the proportion of the Probate Duty which they pay, Ireland would come off very badly, indeed. I do not, however, propose to adopt that principle. I propose to adopt the following system, which I hope will commend itself to the sense of justice of the Committee—namely, to withdraw this amount from the Imperial Exchequer, and to give each country a share of it in proportion to the general contributions of that country to the Exchequer. On this principle, England will be entitled to 80 per cent, Scotland to 11 per cent, and Ireland to 9 per cent. This division is, if anything, a little too favourable to Ireland, as its contributions are in reality only 8·7 per cent; but I have felt obliged to give the benefit of the doubt to the poorer country. I must further state that we propose to extend the Wheel Tax and the Horse Tax to Scotland, though this, again, is a question for the Scotch ratepayer. If so extended, they would go in relief of the Scotch ratepayer, precisely in the same way as the same taxes levied in England will go to the relief of the English ratepayer. This calculation will give to Scotland for the year 1888-9 on account of Probate Duty £156,000, which, with £84,000 in respect of the new Wheel Tax and Horse Tax, which are to be extended to Scotland, will give £240,000 in aid of local taxation. These sums I propose to have

paid over to a fund standing in the name of the Secretary for Scotland, the first charge upon which will be a sum of £70,000 for main roads, which is double the grant put down in the Estimates of this year, a grant, which, as in the case of England, will be withdrawn. The balance will be distributed in a manner to be hereafter settled by the Secretary for Scotland and his advisers, according to the general views of Scotch ratepayers. From April, 1889, the relief to Scotland will be increased by about £80,000 more, as she will then begin to get her share of half the Probate Duty and not only of one-third. Ireland will receive for the year 1888-9 from the Probate Duty £127,000 on the basis of the calculation just explained—that is to say, 9 per cent. Irish Members will, however, of course, bear in mind that they will get one-half as much again next year, for they will then receive their share of one-half of the Probate Duty, instead of one-third. This sum will be paid to a special fund, as in the case of Scotland, and the distribution of it will fall on the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Proposals will be made to Parliament on the subject. My own leaning, I may frankly say, is in favour of relieving the county cess in some form or other. That is the course I should be disposed to suggest; but hon. Members, both from Scotland and Ireland, will forgive me if, owing to the vast number of topics I have had to deal with in my Budget and Conversion Scheme, I have been unable to give this matter of Budgets for Ireland and Scotland that narrow and careful consideration which it deserves. I have done my best, however, to see that—however the money may be allocated—as respects the amount of the money handed over to them, these two countries shall be dealt with in strict conformity with every principle of justice. Of course, also, adjustment will be made to compensate Scotland and Ireland for any loss which might arise from the surrender of licences in England; but the sum required, when the time comes, will not be considerable, and it is unnecessary to enter into that question now.

I have concluded that portion of my task which deals with local finance and with the Local Budget; and hon. Members, I am sure, will excuse the length at which I have spoken, remem-

bering that I have not had to deal with one Local Budget only, but with two Local Budgets, or rather with four, if I include Scotland and Ireland. Now, I will ask the Committee to go back with me, after this long digression, to that surplus, steadily diminishing, of which I have spoken. The original sum was £2,377,000. From that I must give up one-third of the Probate Duty, amounting to £1,420,000. This reduces the surplus to £957,000. On the other hand, I take back the grants to main roads in England and Scotland provided in the Estimates, and amounting to £295,000. This brings the surplus up to £1,252,000, and, adding £50,000 in respect of Succession Duty, I get a total of £1,302,000.

Before I consider what can be done with the bulk of that surplus, there are two or three remissions of taxation which I wish to propose. Hon. Members will have seen that there has been a great deal of discussion lately in the Press with reference to the Carriage Tax. I have been asked by those who are chiefly interested not to hand over the Carriage Tax to the Local Authorities, because they—the persons who are interested—have more confidence in the Imperial Parliament and in the officers of the Inland Revenue than in the new Local Authorities, by whom they themselves will be represented. They are anxious that we should deal with the tax, and accordingly we have determined, in view of this fact, to put the tax on a more satisfactory footing, and to remove some of the grievances which exist in connection with it. The principal grievance in connection with the Carriage Tax has hitherto been the limit of weight. Up to 4 cwt. four-wheel carriages pay 15s., and over 4 cwt. they pay two guineas. This is a heavy tax on the cheaper kind of carriages over 4 cwt., such as the ordinary fly; and it has been urged on me—I do not know to what extent with justice—that this limit of weight discourages the production of well-made carriages. I, therefore, propose a new scale of duties—namely, for all two-wheel carriages, 15s.; for four-wheel carriages, of whatever weight, drawn by one horse, £1 1s.; for four-wheel carriages drawn by two or more horses, or having pair-horse fittings, £2 2s.; for hackney carriages, and all carriages kept by hotel-keepers, 15s.; and for carriages let on hire for

less than three months by coachmakers and others, also 15s.—for it has been urged on me as a considerable grievance that in the case of carriages which are only intermittently used, and for short periods, the full duty should be charged. For carriages used for the first time after October the 1st in any year, half the above rates of duty will be payable. This plan, I think, will give substantial relief to the jobmasters, and meet the complaints of those concerned in the manufacture of carriages. The operation will involve a loss to the Revenue of £30,000.

Another contemplated small remission is in connection with Schedule A of the Income Tax. In 1881 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) gave relief, under Schedule A, to persons having land thrown on their hands and making no profit out of it; but, as the exemption then given was interpreted, it did not apply to lands habitually held in hand. Let me explain. My right hon. Friend only exempted those who tried to let their land and failed to do so. There is, however, a large class of yeoman farmers who never tried to let their land; and these, although they may make no profit, are still exposed to the tax, being excluded from the benefit of my right hon. Friend's exemption. Now, I propose to extend that exemption to lands which are *bond fide* worked for husbandry by their owners, whether they have tried to let them or not. I have had many representations that men farming their own land have for years been paying taxes on profits which they have not made. I propose to extend the exemption so that it shall apply to all lands occupied by their owners, provided they cultivate with a view to deriving profit, but as a matter of fact derive no profit. Hon. Members will understand that the exemption which I propose will not be given to those who have model farms and incur great expenditure for other than the ordinary purposes of husbandry. The exemption will only be extended to land occupied by the owner farming for purposes of husbandry and with a view to profit. Of course, it is not meant to relieve those who farm land near their mansions simply for the sake of certain amenities derived from such farming. This exemption will involve a loss of about

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£20,000. Let me here mention another circumstance. Hon. Members may remember that last year I stated that farmers under Schedule B could claim to be assessed as traders under Schedule D if they should so elect; but the difficulty caused by the insufficiency of the accounts kept by farmers has stood in the way of their availing themselves of this privilege. Some of the best friends of the farmers have told me that, even where the idea found favour with the farmers, it was, nevertheless, difficult to put it into practice on account of the state of their accounts. I do not think, therefore, that my suggestion has been widely adopted, but where it has been adopted I think it has had a great effect. About 160 farmers did return themselves as traders, having been assessed before under Schedule B at £22,000. On that sum they would have had to pay or go through all the forms of appeal; but they accepted the new system, exhibited their accounts before the Income Tax Commissioners, and paid, not upon £22,000, but upon £2,500. I do not think that it is very prudent to make this revelation showing the relief which farmers may get by going under Schedule D. But while I am most anxious to secure for the Revenue every legitimate contribution, I have no desire, through any breakdown of machinery or through the difficulties of appeal, to compel men to pay on profits which they do not make, especially at a time when they are in a position of great difficulty in consequence of the depression of agriculture. Therefore, I have mentioned these circumstances at the risk of encouraging agriculturists to come under Schedule D in large numbers. While upon this subject I may mention as, perhaps, a significant fact, that half the farmers who availed themselves of this new method of paying the tax were Scotchmen.

The last of the small exemptions which I propose affects the licence duty upon hawkers. I dare say that many hon. Members are not aware that there is a licence duty on hawkers. The duty amounts to £4. It is collected all at one time, and it is very difficult indeed for poor men to pay it. It is difficult to collect, and weighs heavily upon a particular class, and I propose, therefore, to repeal it. The origin of this imposition was that hawkers

paid no rates. It was thought that they competed unfairly with traders and shopkeepers who did pay rates. But now, at a time when we are doing our best to relieve ratepayers, it cannot be an improper moment to select to relieve also this small class from a charge which seems to be a hard burden when their scanty earnings are considered. The loss to the Revenue involved in this exemption will be £25,000. This figure shows that there is a considerable number of persons who pay the tax at the present time.

These three reductions in respect of the Carriage Tax, Schedule A, and the hawkers, amount together to £75,000, and reduce my balance from £1,302,000 to £1,227,000. I now arrive at the interesting question of what is to be done with this balance, from which I must take sufficient to provide a surplus of at least £200,000 to carry over to next year. That leaves me a balance of about £1,000,000. I wish to recall to the Committee the view I presented at an earlier stage of my Statement—namely, that the Income Tax falls with special weight upon the poorer middle class; and both from great political and Imperial considerations, and from the point of view of the weight of the Income Tax upon the professional classes, and the less prosperous section of the trading and farming class, I should like to see my way to take off another 1d. I spoke of Imperial considerations. The Income Tax is one of those taxes to which we have recourse upon every emergency, and whenever we can we ought to be able to rely upon this great instrument for prompt financial assistance. Twopence on the Income Tax means an ultimate increase of £4,000,000 and an immediate increase of £3,000,000. It is an enormous and powerful engine, and the question is whether, in a time of profound peace, it is right to keep the Income Tax above 6d., or whether every effort ought not to be made to reduce it to that figure. The Income Tax payers are certain victims of every extraordinary emergency; and although they may not be able to escape a high tax even in a time of profound peace, they ought, nevertheless, to be able to have immunity from an amount above 6d. The rich can afford to pay it, and, as I understand, are ready at every moment

to pay it; but the peculiarity of the tax is that it falls so heavily upon the struggling professional and business man. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, said, in his great speech in 1853—"The operation of the Income Tax taken alone is severe upon intelligence and skill as compared with property."

Well, then, I would wish to be able to take off this 1*d*. But it will be seen that to take off the 1*d*. I should require £1,550,000, while I have only £1,000,000 at my disposal. How is that to be effected? Well, Mr. Courtney, I looked round to see upon what resources I might possibly lay my hands. Many suggestions have been made to me as regards new taxes. I will only deal with one—not, strictly speaking, a new tax, but one to which a great deal of public attention has been attracted. I receive innumerable suggestions that revolvers ought to be taxed. The extraordinary thing is that revolvers, if used, are taxed at this moment; but many people are unaware that they ought to pay the tax, and that they are evading the law of the land if they use their revolvers and do not pay duty upon them. I have been asked if the duty on revolvers is to remain as it is now; and my reply is that the Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with that question. But we propose to deal with that question as I think it ought to be dealt with—that is to say, rather as a matter of police than of finance. I prefer, therefore, not to encumber my Budget with a tax upon revolvers. So I have still to look and see where £550,000 can be found to enable me to reduce the Income Tax. And in the first place, let us inquire, are there not any exemptions which ought to be removed? Are there exemptions by neglect or evasion, or are there exemptions by force of law? There is one exemption by evasion, a neglect of which those Members who are familiar with the Law Courts may have heard. That occurs when persons who are bound to stamp certain instruments do not stamp them until they are produced in Court, and then pay the stamp to make the instruments valid. In a large number of other cases it is notorious that Stamp Duty is evaded. I shall propose certain clauses to make

the application of the existing law somewhat more stringent, and in that attempt I know I shall have the support of the whole Committee, because there can be no wish that existing stamp laws should be enacted, and that by evasion people should not contribute to the Revenue that which is expected from them, and which it is a legal and bounden duty to pay. We propose to introduce a clause insuring greater stringency in the enforcement of existing obligations, which we believe will raise the revenue from stamps by at least £50,000.

What I have just referred to is an exemption by neglect. But there are some exemptions by law, and in inviting the Committee to consider these I am borne up by the feeling that I am approaching the end of my task, and that hon. Members who have followed me through the somewhat intricate proposals I have had to submit to them will soon be able to cease to listen to my almost apparently interminable Statement. There are a large number of securities—I will use popular rather than technical and legal language—which have throughout, either partially or entirely, been exempt from Stamp Duties, while competing securities are paying very high duties. I find a total practical exemption upon some portion of these securities which is not justified by any principle, but has existed so long on account of the practical difficulty of dealing with them. Let me impress on the Committee the anomaly that now exists. On the one hand, as regards registered securities, comprising some of the most solid investments, passing by registered transfer, these highly-respectable securities pay on every transfer, on every journey, so to speak, which they take, 10*s*. per cent on the consideration. The Revenue levies its toll on them, and if they are sold four or five times in the year, £2 or £3 per cent may find its way into the Exchequer. But in the case of the transfer of securities to bearer it is impossible to collect the Stamp Duty in the same way. Before 1862 there were no stamps upon securities to bearer. Between 1862 and 1885 there was something imposed which, to distinguish it from other forms of taxation, I may call a "Birth Tax" of 2*s*. 6*d*. upon every issue. In 1885, it being felt that these bearer bonds, with the soli-

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tary payment of 2s. 6d. on their first issue, were too advantageously placed as compared with their rivals, a circulation tax was put upon them of 7s. 6d., making in all 10s. The state of things, therefore, is this. There are a great many high-class and solid securities which pay $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent every time they are transferred. English securities to bearer, which you can get hold of because they are issued in England, now pay 10s. on issue, which is to clear them for ever from all payments on transfer. There are, however, others in this class which have only paid 2s. 6d. per cent, because they were issued before 1885, and they are now travelling from hand to hand without paying 1s. to the Revenue. Moreover, there is a considerable class of securities which are transferred from hand to hand without paying anything on transfer, and without having paid anything on their issue or introduction to this country. I believe an enormous number of transactions go on in American Shares on which no duty whatever is paid on issue or transfer, but which, in principle, ought to pay for their right to travel from hand to hand in the same way as others. The more solid the security the more it pays; the more fugitive the security the more it escapes duty. What we have to do is to see how we can hit these fugitive securities. The principle will be admitted on the Stock Exchange by the holders of these Stocks. We cannot manage to make them all pay a duty on their issue, because so many of the Companies which issue them are established abroad. Therefore, there are only two courses open to us—either to tax them in the hands of the first holders, after their arrival in this country, or to make them pay an annual tax, which shall be essential to a good delivery, as the phrase is, during a certain period.

The simplest plan would be to tax these securities in the hands of the first holder, because then you can make it a composition tax. But this has two great defects. In the first place, it would be considered very hard upon the first holder that he should have to pay the whole cost of freeing these securities from transfer duty; and, in the next place, I am not prepared to say that the Revenue ought to be satisfied with the composition duty of 10s. per

cent to enable them to circulate from hand to hand for ever, while other securities pay 10s. per cent every time they are transferred. I want, if possible, to devise machinery by which an adequate Stamp Duty may be imposed, which may be distributed over a longer time, and over a larger number of people. I propose to do this by placing an adhesive stamp of 1s. per cent per annum on the nominal value of all securities to bearer which are now circulated without having paid the stamp of 10s. per cent. The effect would be that such Stocks would not pass as a good delivery unless they bore the *ad valorem* stamp which I have mentioned for the year in which the transfer took place. If the securities do not change hands during any one year they will pay no duty for that year. There will be a stamp of 6d. under £50, and 1s. between £50 to £100. This, I believe, will bring in a Revenue of £200,000 to the Exchequer. Every effort will be made by the Inland Revenue to secure the advice of persons who are experts in such matters, in order that the inconvenience, which can be the only objection to the tax, shall not be large. Some inconvenience there must be, and there will be, I admit. On the other hand, I think the Committee will come to the conclusion that whatever difficulties exist must be met, and that on no ground should these securities be allowed to retain their absolute immunity from a Stamp Duty which is paid by every other class of property. The duty, I believe, is so small that it cannot be argued that it will in any way impede business. But, however that may be, I venture to think this step must positively be taken. It has been difficult for me to consult with all those who are concerned in this matter, but I shall be glad of any practical suggestions, and the Inland Revenue will do all in their power to avail themselves of such suggestions; I can, however, hold out no hope that the tax, in some form or other, will not be imposed. I would say to those who are acquainted with the matter that if they can suggest a better method of raising the duty every consideration shall be given to it. I only lay down two principles—namely, that the existing immunity of these securities cannot be allowed to continue, and that whatever method of taxing them is adopted must

promise at least about £200,000 a-year, which is the minimum that they ought, on any reasonable calculation, to pay. I have only to add, on this point, that there is another small change which I propose in the Stamp Duty with regard to a certain class of registered bonds which pay now 6*d.* on transfer. That amount will be raised to 10*s.*, as in the case of other securities of a similar character.

But after a Stamp Duty has been imposed on these securities it is nevertheless certain that it will be impossible to reach all the transactions, because so large a number take place where there is no delivery of Stock at all, and where Stocks are simply bought and sold, and contract notes pass from one person to another. I propose to make a slight but notable change in this respect. A contract note at present bears a stamp of 1*d.* I propose to raise that 1*d.* to 6*d.* I have no doubt that the brokers will be able to charge the 6*d.* to their clients in addition to their brokerage, and so the amount will be distributed over a very wide area. This change will give me another £50,000.

So far every point I have touched upon has related to the abolition of an exemption which ought to be abolished, and I have been engaged in equalizing, rather than in adding to, taxation. There is one more item of a somewhat similar character with which I have to deal. It is a slight adjustment of the tax upon the issue of Companies under the Limited Liability Acts, which will fall upon new Companies and upon the new issues of old Companies. And here I have high authority. The Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade in their last Report state that—

“The creation of Companies might be to some extent restrained if the fee for registration, which is now very low in proportion to the nominal capital, were increased; and the attention of the Legislature might, in our opinion, be advantageously directed to this point, both in the interest of Revenue and in the interest of legitimate trade.”

We propose, without touching the fee stamp on the memorandum of association, to impose an *ad valorem* duty of £1 per £1,000 on registration, whatever the amount of the nominal capital may be. It is not a large tax. A nominal capital of £500,000 will pay a tax of £500; and if it acts as a check on these Limited Liability Companies putting a very much larger nominal capital in

their prospectuses or memorandums of association than they ever intend to employ, that, I think, will be a salutary provision which will in no way tend to check legitimate business. From that source of Revenue I gain £110,000, and I have now towards the £500,000 or £550,000 which I require a total of £410,000.

But I have not yet enough. I must still cast my eyes around me in order to secure some further slight addition to the Revenue. Hon. Members will see that in seeking to make up this amount, which is to enable me to take 1*d.* off the Income Tax, I have not had recourse to any taxation levied on the great articles of consumption; I have not had recourse in any way to the earnings of professional or business men, but to what I believe the Committee will consider to be more legitimate sources of Revenue for my present purpose. I do not know what hon. Members will say to the tax which I am now about to propose. I turn to a source of Revenue which, perhaps, will give a not very pleasant surprise to some Members of this House. There is one taxable commodity which is not at the disposal of the great consuming classes, but which is essentially a luxury of the well-to-do. I cast my eyes upon wine—not on the cheap wines, for the introduction of which the public is so deeply indebted to my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, but those finer wines which, if an *ad valorem* duty were imposed upon them, would pay more than they now pay when the test of the amount of duty is alcoholic strength. The alcoholic test is the best which the authorities have been able to devise for taxing a commodity of which alcohol may be a pleasing and a necessary part, but is certainly not that element which is most attractive in the opinion of epicures in the matter of wine. The fact that the duty is levied on the amount of the spirit which wine contains puts the same tax, and in some cases a higher tax, on cheap wines than on wines of the highest quality. Some of the most expensive wines are of low alcoholic strength, and yet they are taxed no more than the cheaper wines. Quality and value cannot be measured by mechanical or analytical processes. There is only one way to get at the high class and costly wines, and that is to reach them in an indirect manner, and I

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propose to effect that by recurring to a tax which was imposed in 1861, and which lasted till 1866, when it was taken off, not on account of any inherent defects, but in consequence of the representations of Powers, with whom we were then engaged in some very delicate commercial negotiations. From 1861 to 1865 there was a tax on bottled wines. These wines are, for the most part, synonymous with high class and costly wines, and they are, especially in the present day, champagnes. It is very possible that an extra tax imposed upon these high-class wines may lead to some remonstrances from Foreign Powers; but I am bound to say that remonstrances of ours to Foreign Powers with regard to impositions of duties on British goods have not been so entirely successful as to make it necessary for us, more than is absolutely compatible with our own interests, to look beyond the fiscal merits of the question. The system of *ad valorem* taxation, which in some cases is so admirable in practice, is almost impossible in that of wine. But you may arrive roughly at the same result by putting an extra tax on bottled wines, which will in most cases not affect the cheaper class of wines, because they are, or can be, imported in the wood, but will fall upon the more costly sort of wine—an article not of necessity, but of pleasure, yet which is becoming one of almost daily use. I propose a tax of 5s. per dozen on bottled wines, which is equivalent to 2s. 6d. a-gallon. Originally, the idea was to impose a duty of 6s. a-dozen, but in that case the merchant would argue that he must have something to recoup him for the additional capital advanced to meet the new impost, and he would put on an extra charge of 1s. a-bottle, because he had had to pay 6d. a-bottle more duty. But this duty of 5s. a-dozen will enable the wine merchant to recoup himself, even if he charges only 6d. extra per bottle. I estimate this tax to bring in an additional revenue of £125,000. I take note, in making this estimate, of the probable, nay certain, diminution of the amount of wine which may at present be imported in bottle, and which will in future be imported in casks. It is possible that the bottling trade in England may receive a certain impetus, but I cannot conceive that that is an objection to the plan. What we have

to look to is to fine wines such as Margaux, Lafitte, La Rose, and the more expensive class of champagnes, which must continue to be imported in bottle as before. I trust hon. Members will not grudge the imposition of this tax; but I admit that the greater portion of this additional tax will have to be borne by sparkling wines. If any hon. Members regret that I have taxed wine, as I have, to a certain extent, put taxes on the more speculative class of transactions, let them remember what I hope will be the outcome of all these details—namely, that we make a great step in the direction of securing that the Income Tax shall be reduced to 6d. I have calculated that if a man with £2,000 a-year should receive a remission of 1d. in the Income Tax, he would be able to afford to drink a bottle of champagne at the increased price—that is to say 6d. extra, every day in the year. The recipient of £1,000 a-year would be able to indulge in this luxury every other day in the year, or to have one pint, paying 3d. extra for it, every day. If by this means we secure to the Revenue a slightly larger contribution from the club man, who lives in chambers and pays few rates or taxes, I do not think he will complain when he reflects that he, too, is a citizen, and ought to share the burdens of his fellows. And now I have come to the end of my list, and I am rejoiced to think that I have put together a surplus amounting to £1,762,000, and am able to deduct my 1d. from the Income Tax. That deduction will involve a loss of £1,550,000, leaving me a balance of £212,000.

I have now reached the goal at which I wished to arrive—of being able in this year, without placing any new taxes upon persons who cannot well bear them—of being able to relieve to a great extent—to a notable extent—the rate-payers of the country, and at the same time to make what I hope will be considered a substantial relief in the direction of Imperial taxation.

The final figures are as follows:—Customs, which stood at £19,800,000, with the addition of the tax on bottled wines, will reach £19,925,000; Excise, which was £25,560,000, deducting £55,000 for remission of Hawkers' and Carriage Taxes, will stand at £25,505,000; Stamps, which were £12,740,000, but from which we have

taken off Probate Duty to the amount of £1,420,000, are again raised by the addition of the new Stamp Duties and the extra Succession Duty to £11,780,000; Land Tax, £1,046,000; House Duty, £1,890,000; Income Tax, which was £13,820,000, less £20,000 for Schedule A, and one penny off the tax, amounting to £1,550,000, leaves £12,250,000—a total Tax Revenue of £72,396,000; while the Non-Tax Revenue is £14,431,000, or a grand total of £86,827,000. On the other hand, the total Expenditure is £86,615,000, leaving a surplus of £212,000. The effect of the Budget in general is to distribute the surplus between the ratepayer and the taxpayer. The ratepayer of the United Kingdom will get, in round figures, £2,050,000, of which about £920,000 is due to the new licences in England and Scotland, and the taxpayer will get £1,625,000, of which £585,000 is raised by new taxation.

And now I have only one paragraph more in the Statement which I have to lay before the Committee. The circumstances of the time have imposed the necessity upon us of not only looking to the next year, but to the year after next. We shall then have to surrender an additional sixth part of the Probate Duty, and also to make good the difference between the grants in aid which are taken back and the licences handed over, and the two operations will, taken together, cost us £1,400,000. The circumstances of the case are such that we have been obliged to settle once for all the contributions to local expenditure, so as to place them upon a firmer basis. I do not consider myself entitled to take into account the probable increase of the Revenue in the course of two years, nor the revival of trade which we hope to see thoroughly established. I must contemplate, and the Committee must contemplate, the possibility that this sum may have to be raised; but, on the other hand, it is impossible to enact taxes before the Bill is passed, before we know what the contingent payments will be. But I would wish to lay down certain propositions with regard to the mode by which this sum ought to be met. I will state it in the strongest way negatively. It must not be met by any increase of duties which rest upon the industrial class. It must not be met by any duties resting upon the earnings of

the mass of the people. It must not be derived from duties contributed by professional men, by industry, and by skill. But it must be met by duties on property or the result of property, or from that promising item of stamps, from which I have already reaped a certain advantage, but which is by no means an exhausted field. I will not point to the fact that in the year after next there will be available for the disposal of my Successor, if I should have one by then, a sum which may amount to £1,000,000, if the Conversion Scheme is successful. I will not take that into account, because I wish to reserve the application of that amount; and I do not wish to pledge Parliament, or the Government, or myself, as to whether the whole, or a portion, or none of it, should be employed in the remission of taxation, or, on the other hand, in the diminution of the Public Debt. My right hon. Friend admitted that it was fair to reserve such determination until we could see what would be the resources at our disposal when the conversion had reached a certain stage. But there, at all events, it stands, a sum, I hope, of about £1,000,000, which will be added to the national resources in the year 1889-90, and will be followed by a yet larger sum in the following year. This is a contingency which I have a right to indicate, but which I have not taken into account. I have stated the sources from which I believe this gap ought to be met, by duties on property and the results of property, from stamps, or from some re-arrangement of the Death Duties, or from taxes of that class.

And now I rejoice to think I have come to the end of my long and I fear almost interminable story. The subjects have been so vast, so complicated, that it has really been impossible for me to attempt to do justice to most of them. I should have been glad to have built up step by step as I passed on a rampart of solid masonry, so to speak, in the shape of argument, around every proposal I have made. I feel that during the comparatively short time I have had to devote to each several point, I may have left positions undefended which will be bombarded by heavy guns in the course of the discussion which will ensue. On the other hand, the amount of work arising out of the great Conversion Scheme,

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concerning which, I am happy to say, there is every indication of its being successful, has put it out of my power to devote as much time to the preparations of my statement as might possibly have resulted in my being able to condense my remarks. Hence I have omitted many great subjects. Perhaps my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) will think that I ought to have dealt with that fiscal change he advocates in the shape of some form of Fair Trade; but I have had to enter into too many discussions arising out of the proposals I have made to enter into the discussion of proposals I cannot accept. There is an omission of a different kind which I regret even more. I should have liked to refer to the important subjects of light gold and of the circulation, which I touched upon last year in my Budget Speech, and upon which I have been engaged, and measures for dealing with which are in an advanced stage. I hope still, looking to the facilities which the House of Commons now kindly gives for the discussion of Business, that I may be able to submit proposals on these subjects for the consideration of the House even in the present year. But, at any rate, I have placed before the House the main financial proposals of the Government. We have tried to consider the interest of the ratepayer as well as of the taxpayer; we have endeavoured, as far as we can, to be just to both. I have felt, and I feel, the extreme difficulty of the adjustments between the two vast fields of Imperial and Local Taxation. But, at least, we have endeavoured to lay before the House proposals conceived in a just and liberal spirit, and we submit them with some confidence to the favourable consideration of the Committee and the country.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards raising the Supply granted to Her Majesty, the Duties of Customs now chargeable on Tea shall continue to be levied and charged on and after the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, until the first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, on the importation thereof into Great Britain and Ireland (that is to say):—

Tea . . . the pound . . . Sixpence."

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think there is one point on which every

hon. Member of the House will agree. I ask the cordial assent of the Committee when I say that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, throughout the three hours and a quarter during which he has addressed us, has held the attention of the Committee thoroughly, and has made himself perfectly clear to all those who take an interest in finance, with regard to the proposals he has placed before us. We desire, whatever may be our opinions, either on the spur of the moment, or when we have had time to consider them, to thank him for placing those proposals before us in so explicit and clear a manner. I have very little to add to these words, for the present is not the occasion for criticizing the details of the Budget; and, therefore, I postpone any criticisms I may have to make upon the principles of the right hon. Gentleman's Budget, or their application, until the more appropriate opportunity which will present itself on the adoption of the Resolutions in Committee or Second Reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. But before I sit down I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one or two questions. I wish to ask him, in the first place, whether he has any objection to circulate at once, not to-morrow, but as soon as he possibly can, a Paper showing in detail the proposals he has made to the Committee? I followed the right hon. Gentleman through his whole speech, and I think he will not blame me if I say that the number of figures and calculations which he has placed before us is so large that it is not possible for anyone to carry them away in his mind so as to understand them thoroughly, even though we may supplement our recollection by reading the report of his speech in the newspapers. I therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will, in the first place, give us a Paper showing the details of his proposals? Probably, if it is laid *pro forma* on the Table of the House to-morrow, a Paper could be circulated in a day or two, showing not only the details of his proposals, but also more minute figures relating to the Revenue and Expenditure of the last and coming year, which, considering how lengthy his statement necessarily was, he has very wisely, I think, curtailed. For instance, I think my right hon. Friend gave us no details whatever as to the

charges on the Consolidated Fund beyond the Debt totals. It has, I think, been always usual to give these details; but my right hon. Friend has not mentioned them at all. I see that my right hon. Friend admits that I am asking nothing unusual, and I think we may also ask him to give us some more details of Revenue. If my right hon. Friend will do that, I think he will greatly assist the discussion which will take place in a few days. I was glad that, with reference to future years, my right hon. Friend exercised some caution by warning the Committee on one subject particularly—namely, as to what will be the prospective effect of the Budget which, although it leaves for 1888-9 a certain surplus, contemplates that unless a marked improvement in trade or economy in expenditure takes place the deficit of 1889-90 will be serious. The right hon. Gentleman will forgive me for saying that, in speaking of the prospective deficit, he omitted to refer to one very important item—that is, the loss of Income Tax as between 1889 and 1890.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I may, perhaps, meet that point at once. The loss upon the Income Tax will probably be made up by the natural increase in the average incomes of the country. In calculating the probable Revenue, we must not forget that we have passed through some bad years, and are now approaching a year in which we hope to receive more from the Income Tax.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am glad to hear that from the right hon. Gentleman. I did not at all refer to the subject as a matter for blame, and the information which my right hon. Friend will give us in print will, no doubt, make this matter perfectly plain. Again, my right hon. Friend promised last year that the subject of light gold coinage was one which he would bring this year before Parliament. I presume that the conversion of the light gold coinage will involve a heavy charge this year.

Mr. GOSCHEN: No increased charge will be involved in the conversion.

Mr. CHILDERS: I am glad to hear that statement; but I must remind my right hon. Friend that he has two alternatives—either to make a proposal which will create a charge upon the year, or to make a proposal which will make no such charge; he must do one of two things if he brings forward a

proposal with regard to the light gold coinage during the present year; and if the plan involves a charge it will diminish his surplus. [Mr. GOSCHEN: No.] My right hon. Friend is very ingenious, and I will give him credit for finding out some third plan; but let me impress upon him that the state of the gold coinage is so extremely bad, and has got so much worse since I was unfortunately unable, through the early Prorogation, to carry out the proposal I made to the House four years ago, that whereas, for instance, one-half of the half-sovereigns were light then, there are, I believe, three-quarters of them light at the present time.

Mr. GOSCHEN: A scheme of the character indicated by the right hon. Gentleman is in an advanced stage of preparation.

Mr. CHILDERS: I rejoice at the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, as I know that it is most important that there should be no delay in dealing with this subject. As there is no pressing necessity for the Resolutions which have been placed in the hands of the Chairman, I would put it to the Committee that they should not be debated this evening, but that we should adjourn the present debate.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I hope that right hon. Gentlemen opposite will not object to pass the Resolutions relating to the Wine Duties and Income Tax, because if the former is not passed to-night large quantities of wine will be taken out of bond to-morrow and sold during the rest of the year free of the increased duty. My right hon. Friend will understand also, with regard to the Income Tax, that the dividends are payable on the 5th of April; and if the Committee will assent to the remission of the one penny of Income Tax it will, of course, enormously facilitate the collection of the Revenue for the year, and avoid the great labour that would otherwise be incurred. Of course, I have no right to press this, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not see their way; but I am sure they will appreciate the difficulty now that the dividends are so shortly payable, and perceive that it would be a very great assistance if the Committee will deal rapidly with these two Resolutions.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think that the appeal of the right hon.

Mr. Childers

Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) on the subject of the Wine Duties ought to be assented to without objection; but as to the Income Tax, it seems to me impossible that we should proceed with the Resolution now. I believe with my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) that no Resolution on that subject has ever been taken on the first night of the Budget when there has been a change of duty. Everyone who has listened to the very able statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see that in consequence of the proposed change many other taxes are to be imposed; and I do not think we should give any opinion on this matter now. There are one or two points on which I should like some further details. I do not in the least complain of the right hon. Gentleman for not having given us full details of the items of Revenue; but if he will let us have them in a printed form it would be interesting to the House. The right hon. Gentleman stated that in the Customs of last year there was a falling off of £80,000; and I cannot make out what are the items in which an increase of duty has taken place that would so countervail that as to result ultimately in an increase of £30,000 on Customs. Then the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the great increase in the Probate Duty. I think he will find that last year either my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers), or I, told him we thought he was taking his stand too low. The real truth is, that there has been of late years a disposition—I do not know why—to undervalue the Stamp Duties. The Stamp Duties have almost invariably exceeded the estimates made of them. This year they have, no doubt, exceptionally increased. I would say for the consolation of my hon. Friend the Member for Central Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) and others, who think that we have for the last 40 years or more been pursuing a ruinous commercial policy, that, if we had been pursuing a policy injurious to our trade and to our interests, we should not have found the realized wealth of the country constantly increasing beyond our expectations. Two years ago, when people were in despair about the prosperity of the country, I was criticized severely because I would not believe

that all the interests of the country were ruined. One of the points I especially insisted upon was the increase in the Probate Duty. In 1886 I mentioned that then the Probate Duty had reached the highest point it had ever obtained, and now I am glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Probate Duty has reached a still higher point. I think we may judge from that that the apprehension which existed some years ago as to the general distress of the country was ill founded, and that, also, we may believe that the system we are pursuing is one which is not really injurious to the interests of the country. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has prided himself upon the large reduction he has effected in the Debt. I may be allowed, in all good humour, to tell him he has been a reducer of the Debt *malgré lui*, because he reduced the provision made for the reduction of the Debt by £2,000,000. What has really reduced the Debt is the existing law of the old Sinking Fund, which has appropriated his surplus—his surplus of £2,000,000—to the reduction of the Debt. The fact is, that the surplus he has derived from the large yield of the Probate Duty has been by the operation of the law appropriated—I think I am right in so saying—to the reduction of the Debt. Owing to the prosperity of the country and the wisdom of previous legislation, though my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer took £2,000,000 off the new Sinking Fund, the £2,000,000 has reappeared under the old Sinking Fund. The reduction of the Debt is made, in spite of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by the operation of the law, through his surplus being applied to that. I should not have alluded to that but for the references to the savings the right hon. Gentleman has effected in the future upon the conversion of the Debt. If I am not wrong, the existing law would apply that money to the reduction of Debt; and I do hope that in future the House of Commons will not be a party to breaking down the law by which savings effected upon the interest will go in reduction of the Debt. I may point out to the House the enormous value of the old Sinking Fund under which I imagine the interest saved

upon the Debt will go to the reduction of the capital of the Debt. See how it has operated. It operated in my time, to a certain extent, in reducing the Debt. It has operated to the amount of £2,000,000 in reducing the Debt in spite of the provision made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction of the new Sinking Fund. It is a provision of enormous value, and I hope the House of Commons will not be disposed to depart from it. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of his increased balances, and also of the balances as being a reduction of Debt. Now, I confess I think that is rather a loose doctrine. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows very well that I have objected to the returns of the condition of the Debt in which the balances are shown as an asset. I know there are arguments both one way and the other. Certainly the whole of the balances cannot be spoken of as an asset. You might just as well, before you pay your Christmas Bills, talk of the balance at your bankers on the 24th of December as an asset, when you know perfectly well that the great part is going immediately in the discharge of debt. Of course, there is the nest egg of the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal, I will admit, has been a very fortunate speculation; but there is nothing so ruinous to a nation as to an individual to find its first speculation a successful one, because if a nation is to go into more speculations of this character, I think the results are likely to be very disastrous. I do hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not meditating putting any of these balances into the Panama Canal in consequence of the successes which have been achieved in the Suez Canal. I only hope we may be satisfied with the success of the Suez Canal, and that we may never repeat the experiment, because I am convinced if the nation speculates in transactions of this kind it will experience the fate which befalls individuals. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a very interesting reference to the farmers' schedule, or schedule B. The remarkable part of it, however, was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh made the same offer to the farmers some three years ago; but for some reason or other they did not at that time accept it. I only make

Sir William Harcourt

these very incidental remarks because in the case of important proposals of the character the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made, one must take time to consider and to reserve his criticism for a future occasion. My right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh has alluded to what is the most serious feature of this Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget and in the Local Government Bill is going to enact charges for which he makes no future provision, or, at all events, but very imperfect provision. He has made charges which he will meet partially in the present year under the temporary arrangement, but the charges in the Local Government Bill and in the Budget will, I understand, be permanent charges which cannot be altered. For these he has made no provision. He has said very frankly that he has only made the provision which is necessary in the present year; for the year which is to come after that, charges will subsist, but there is no provision for them. That is a very serious financial omission, which has certainly not been usual in Imperial Budgets. That is a subject which will have hereafter to be very carefully considered, because, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not make provision in money, he made provision in a series of what I may call "financial moral sentiments." He concluded his speech by admitting that there would be a charge of £1,550,000 which would have to be met in the year after next; but he said that "It must not be met by this, it must not be met by that, and I will not tell you how it is to be met." That seems to me to be somewhat doubtful finance; but of course we shall have more opportunity of considering the point later on.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a statement which I hope he will explain a little more fully. The right hon. Gentleman told us over and over again that he is giving great advantages to the local ratepayers—that this is a Local Budget. I understand he intends to hand over to the local ratepayers £5,500,000, but that at the same time he takes away £2,600,000, which is now given in the form of grants in aid. That will leave a paltry £300,000. [*Cries of "£3,000,000."*] We get

now £2,600,000, and we are to have £5,500,000. What remains to us is £2,900,000, and this is to be made up by additional taxation.

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman stated the figures correctly in the first instance, but did not do the sum. The total advance will be £5,500,000. From that you have to deduct £2,600,000, leaving not the paltry sum of £300,000, but £2,900,000, nearly £3,000,000. It is £3,000,000 fresh money.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if I am right in supposing he told us that the whole of the Hawkers' Tax is to be repealed? I should also like him to tell us whether hawkers' carts will be taxed, and whether, if hawkers' licences are to be abolished, similar relief ought not to be given to the poorer class of vendors—the pedlars?

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I do not desire to go into what I may call the controversial points of this Budget, because I know that the House of Commons has now a very difficult task before it. It has the difficulty of dealing with the very able statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) in introducing the Local Government Bill as well as of dealing with the Budget, and there is the difficulty of considering the two combined. It seems to me that there are several points in this Budget which will require very great consideration. For instance, the proposal that a large amount of personalty should go in relief of the rates is one which we shall do well to consider very carefully. But I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the very able statement he has made. I think he was perfectly right in the beginning of his statement to pay a great tribute to the public servants. I am sure he must have taxed the abilities and the time of the public servants in the collection of the enormous array of facts and figures he has laid before the Committee. There are one or two points which I am sure the whole country will receive with satisfaction. Whatever may be the result of remitting a 1d. of the Income Tax, I am convinced that the right hon. Gentleman's endeavour to make the transactions on the Stock Ex-

change, which have hitherto paid nothing, bear their fair share towards the National Revenue, will be received with great satisfaction in the country. I only hope that the efforts of the right hon. Gentleman to lay hold of this portion of the revenue will not be frustrated by the difficulties which are sure to be thrown in his way. In my constituency there has been for years great complaint that the heavy vehicles were entirely free from toll, and that the farmers had to maintain the roads. I think the proposal to tax the class of large vehicles the right hon. Gentleman has alluded to £1 is a most righteous proposition. It is but proper that these vehicles should pay towards the wear and tear of the roads, of which they have been so large a user, and to which they do so much damage. With regard to the tax on wheels, I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman could have seen his way to leave the farmers' carts untaxed.

MR. GOSCHEN: I thought I made it clear that carts employed in husbandry are not to be taxed.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for correcting me. Sitting below the Gangway I was not able to hear that he made any exception to the tax. The tax on horses of luxury is a most legitimate tax; but of all the alterations the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to make, I think the one which will give the greatest satisfaction is that he proposes to make in the Carriage Tax. I, for one, would have been glad if he had repealed the carriage tax, because I regard it very much in the light of a tax upon labour; but if we are to have a carriage tax, certainly the way the right hon. Gentleman proposes to deal with it is one which will remove a great deal of grievance. I must congratulate the Government upon the comparative absence of Supplementary Estimates. The amount of Supplementary Estimates they have brought in is very small, and I hope the example they have set will be followed in future. With regard to the more important points of the Budget, I desire to reserve any opinion I may have of them until I see further what are actually the right hon. Gentleman's propositions.

JOB RASCH (J x, S.E.):
p. ing, as I do,

division which has been very hardly hit, and which has more land out of cultivation than almost any other county in the Kingdom, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the very large measure of relief he has promised us, and also upon the fact that he has fulfilled the hope which he raised in the minds of the deputation of agricultural Members who waited upon him about this day last year. I also wish to protest as strongly as I can against the statement that the relief the right hon. Gentleman is giving us is only a grant in aid of the squirearchy. This grant in aid is a grant in aid of agricultural labourers and farmers, and I do not think any hon. Gentleman on either side of the House will deny that we want the assistance which the right hon. Gentleman is going to give us. As I have said, we in South-East Essex have more land out of cultivation than any other county in the Kingdom; in fact, our farmers are divided practically into two categories—those who are ruined, and those who are going to be ruined. I do not want to pursue such an unpleasant subject; but I wish to assure the right hon. Gentleman that the farmers and labourers in the division I represent will remember very gratefully the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has been the first to bring the equalization of taxation of real and personal property into the area of practical politics, and who has done all he can to take undue burdens off the land.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): After the long and exhaustive statement the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has addressed to us, I shall only ask him one question. I wish to know whether my impression is correct—that in addition to the present one-half per cent on the issue of Foreign Bonds, there is to be an annual tax of 1s. per cent on all Foreign Bonds and Stock Exchange transactions not now liable to duty? I also desire to say that the chosen representatives of the experts, to whom the right hon. Gentleman alluded, will certainly afford him every assistance in his power, without which assistance I am persuaded some of the proposals he has shadowed forth cannot be carried into effect.

MR. AUSTIN (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross): It will be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman the

Chancellor of the Exchequer that some time ago an appeal was made to him concerning the great hardship suffered by some tenant farmers in having been called upon to pay Income Tax twice over. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will provide some remedy for such an unjust state of things.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): There are only one or two matters of minor importance which I wish to mention. When I had the honour, some years ago, of representing a division of Yorkshire, there was a great hardship felt by many of the small farmers in consequence of the tax on horses. The tax at that time was paid by them if by some chance they happened to use their horses for pleasure. I am sure it will be a great source of satisfaction to the small farmers in that district if, before the debate closes, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will assure us that horses used mainly for agricultural purposes will not be brought under taxation, because by some accident horses may be used from time to time by a farmer for his own pleasure and for the amusement of his family. The second point—I am ashamed to mention these small matters, but they are matters of practical interest—is the tax on carts. I have had for some time the honour of being a member of the Highway Committee in the West Riding of the county of Yorkshire, where there have been heavy rates in consequence of the enormously weighty burdens carried on the roads by traction engines. We have the power—and we exercise it—to levy toll on the locomotive itself in the shape of a licence; but we have no power to tax the carts. These carts, as we all know, form a long train, and their effect on the roads is most destructive. The roads are not constructed to bear heavy burdens. The mechanism of the roads is utterly annihilated, and passage along them by ordinary vehicles becomes almost impossible. I am delighted to hear the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, because that injustice will no longer be allowed. I have no doubt that when these carts are brought under taxation they will be used with greater moderation, and that improper use of roads will not continue. I congratulate the Government on their proposals. They are wide and far-reaching proposals; they do not relieve one class to the injury of

Major Rasch

another; but I believe they will prove a relief to many classes. I am sure the proposals will be received by the country with great thankfulness. There is one very humble class which has been for years groaning under taxation, and which will be relieved by the Government proposals, and that is the class of hawkers. I have sufficient knowledge of the feelings of magistrates to be able to say that no duty imposed on magistrates which is discharged by them with greater regret than the duty of fining hawkers without licences. Many of them are poor but industrious people, and the taxation levied upon them is a severe pressure upon their honest trade. The licence was intended as a prohibition upon what was regarded as a nuisance in the country; but it has acted most mischievously and has produced a great hardship upon these simple but deserving persons. I am glad that I have been permitted to make these observations. They are few, indeed, but perhaps they are not unworthy of some consideration amongst the larger questions which occupy our attention.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he only intended to touch upon the Budget from one point of view, and that was so far as it related to Irish interests. He looked upon this Budget as the third step in the very complete change which the English Treasury Bench had been effecting during the past three or four years in the financial relations of England and Ireland, and he was not at all sorry to have to discuss that change whilst the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was in Office, because he rather liked the tone of that right hon. Gentleman in dealing with money matters. The right hon. Gentleman was the only person on the Treasury Bench who did not pretend to be generous to Ireland in money matters, and whilst not claiming to be generous he was the only one who tried to be just. The right hon. Gentleman discussed the matter from that point of view. Those who pretended to be generous were committing the grossest injustice to Ireland, from a pecuniary point of view. Ireland suffered this great disadvantage, that she had not had a single Member on the Treasury Bench during the past 30 or 40 years. The result was that the Irish Members

were untrained in these subjects, and had many difficulties to contend with in considering and discussing them. There were three steps which had taken place in the monetary relations between England and Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman would recognize the fact. The first change occurred when the roads were disturnpiked. A modest sum of money was given to England and Scotland in regard to the operation then brought about; but as Ireland was not affected no equivalent was given to her. The old custom had been to put duties on England and not to put them on Ireland, and this was the first change in the direction of a subvention or a covert subvention. Nominally, Ireland was always better treated than England or Scotland; but in the case to which he (Colonel Nolan) referred, money was given to England and Scotland and not to Ireland, the reason advanced by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer then in Office being that no carriage duty was charged in Ireland. The amount given in the case of England and Scotland was an offset on the Carriage Tax. That was the first step. The second step came last year. He did not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the fact was that additional moneys were given to England and Scotland—either £180,000 or £280,000, he forgot which. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time said he considered a gift of £50,000 to Ireland would be equivalent to the amount given to England and Scotland, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed out his opinions—because he spoke pretty much then as he had spoken to-night—the Irish Members would all of them have agreed with him. But that £50,000 had been frittered away; there were so many interests at stake, and the clerks and Government officials in Ireland got round the Government to such good purpose, inducing them to go in for fancy schemes of arterial drainage, and so on, that the money was actually wasted—at any rate, three-fifths of it had been spent. The great danger in dealing with Irish matters was that there were always two or three Members who understood the agricultural parts of Ireland sitting on the same side of the House as the right hon. Gentleman, who undertook to advise him; and it was

solely by these two or three Gentlemen that the Government were guided. They were cut off from the great bulk of the Irish Members in the House. The result of this state of things, in the case to which he was referring, was that this £50,000 given last year to Ireland had either been wasted or not expended. The second step, therefore, was giving a certain sum to England and Scotland, and pretending to give the same to Ireland, but in reality doing nothing of the kind. What had been given had been frittered away in Dublin. The third step was far more important, and had come in in that portion of the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which dealt with the Local Government Bill. That question became of great importance in the pecuniary relations of the two countries. They had, up to this point, dealt with sums of moderate amount. Under the disturn-piked roads arrangement it would only have come to £40,000; last year the amount given to Ireland came to £50,000; but now they found the amount given to Ireland should be about £500,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the gross sum for England would be £5,800,000, and that he considered Ireland to be entitled to 1-11th of the amount that England was entitled to, from a taxable point of view, so that the amount given to Ireland would be considerably over £500,000. As to what the proportion should be between Ireland and the United Kingdom, he (Colonel Nolan) did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. The proportion between the two could only be settled by one of two sets of statistics—one he himself had moved for at a time when there was no political question before the House, and which was granted by the Treasury. That Return showed that Ireland paid 1-9th or 1-10th of the whole taxation of the United Kingdom, leaving out—exactly as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had left out to-night—the Post Office receipts from the ordinary taxation. Since that time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had brought a re-edited edition of the statistics; but that edition was brought out at a peculiar time—namely, at a time when political questions between England and Ireland were to the

Colonel Nolan

fore and Party feeling ran high, and though they cut out down the proportion of the United Kingdom, he did not think it was as likely to be correct as the statement given by the Treasury on his (Colonel Nolan's) Motion on the first occasion, when there was no political question touched by the figures. He thought that, under the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to prove to the House on what he grounded his assertion that Ireland was only 1-11th part of the United Kingdom for taxable purposes. He must have been guided either by independent Returns of his own, or by the Returns obtained by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, or the Returns granted upon his (Colonel Nolan's) Motion, which he thought were the truest of the three. Putting that point aside for the present, he should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman exactly what he intended to adopt as the share of Ireland in this Local Government arrangement? The right hon. Gentleman said £127,000.

MR. GOSCHEN: This coming year.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would follow up the opinion he had expressed with regard to the application of this sum better than he had done last year. Last year he had expressed very much the same opinion as that they had heard from him to-night; but he had not followed it out. The right hon. Gentleman had said he hoped the money would go to the county cess. He (Colonel Nolan) trusted the right hon. Gentleman would now put his foot down, and say that the money must go to the county cess. He would much sooner trust the right hon. Gentleman than he would the great majority of the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench on this question, and he would urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see that the money was spent in Ireland as it was in England. There would not be the slightest chance of getting justice if the Treasury Bench listened to everybody in Dublin who made representations to them, men who wanted new salaries, and things of that kind, and who got round the Chief Secretary, getting him to adopt fancy schemes. If the money were given in Ireland as it was in England, the Irish people would throw in their lot with the English

people, and would take the same chance that the English ratepayers took. Was he to understand that 4*d.* per head for the indoor paupers was to be given besides the £127,000?

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the contribution from the Probate Duty paid that 4*d.* per head, and that that contribution amounted in the case of Ireland to £127,000.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the right hon. Gentleman would own that, though he had spent over three hours in explaining the matter, and although, no doubt, he had done it far better than anyone else would have been able to do it, he had not been able to devote more than eight or 10 minutes to this part of the subject, and therefore it was not to be wondered at that the Irish Members had not grasped the whole meaning of the arrangement, so far as Ireland was concerned. The £127,000, it seemed, was to be the gross amount given to Ireland, and that would be increased at the end of next year by one-third.

MR. GOSCHEN: By one-half.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he maintained that Ireland ought to get about £500,000, seeing that the United Kingdom was to receive £5,800,000. The only way the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get out of that was by a special system of allotting all those taxes which were paid in England, and which were not paid in Ireland, to local rates. That was a clever plan, no doubt, but they must remember that for the past 10 or 20 years Ireland had been very badly treated in this House. The Government had said—"There are certain taxes which are paid in England, but which you do not pay in Ireland;" but all that sort of thing, it must be remembered, now came to an end under this Budget, and Ireland, instead of being treated better, was treated worse than ever. He (Colonel Nolan) recognized the justice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the right hon. Gentleman did not claim generosity—in not considering the difference between the yield of Probate Duty in England and Ireland. But why should the right hon. Gentleman take the Probate Duty? It was a matter of selection—he must either take that duty or some other duty to assist the paupers. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman had acted very wisely; and he had seen, very properly,

that he could not affect the relations between England and Ireland. He (Colonel Nolan) had argued this question with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in this House; and, therefore, he might claim that he argued it altogether apart from political feeling. The yield of the Probate Duty in Ireland was very small compared with its yield in this country; but, relatively speaking, the poorer classes in Ireland were much more heavily taxed than they were in England. He quite acknowledged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had behaved fairly in not applying the Probate Duty equally, which would have been the most unfair and fallacious test between the two countries which could be devised. On the whole, he recognized the fairness of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals in regard to the Probate Duty; but otherwise he was of opinion that the Budget, in connection with the Local Government Bill, would bear with extreme hardship on Ireland, unless it were reconsidered. The right hon. Gentleman might say—"I have left no inequality of taxation between the two countries—all those taxes which were unequal I have swept away, and I have put them on the local rates in England." That was the utmost the right hon. Gentleman could say for his Budget. He (Colonel Nolan) did not think there was a tax left in England which was not paid in Ireland, except, perhaps, that for armorial bearings, which the people of Ireland were perfectly ready to pay. As to the Cart Tax, he was ready to assent to it, so far as Ireland was concerned, if agricultural carts were omitted—not only the carts used in farm work, but those light carts in which the farmer and his family went to market once a-week. If such carts as those were to be included, the tax would be a most iniquitous one, and would bring about a little revolution in Ireland. Most families in the country districts had small carts, which were used for this purpose; and, whether or not the imposition was right and just, it would prove the most unpopular tax the Government could invent. And the same in regard to horses. If it were merely to be on pleasure horses, or on horses used for professional purposes—driving the solicitor about, and so on—he should not object. As to the additional tax it

was proposed to put on champagne and foreign securities, the people of Ireland would not care much about that, as they had very little to do with such things.

MR. GOSCHEN: I desire to answer several questions which have been put to me; and, in the first place, I will refer to what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan). The hon. and gallant Gentleman seems to think I have fallen short of the ideal standard he would wish to see applied to the two countries; but when he complains that there is only £127,000 applied to Ireland, and that next year it would be only £190,000, I would remind him that I used a phrase which I very carefully selected—namely, that if any further adjustment were necessary between the two countries in consequence of the transfer of licences in England to the Local Authorities, as against the withdrawal of the grants, and if that proceeding left a hole in the Revenue, which would be to the disadvantage of other portions of the United Kingdom, that would be made a matter for adjustment between the two countries. If the effect of the transfer should be to leave Ireland at a disadvantage as compared with England, I should consider it my duty, in the case of Ireland as in the case of Scotland, to make a corresponding adjustment. The hon. and gallant Member speaks of the total sum which is to be given to England as £5,500,000. He must deduct from that the grants she now gets, but will hereafter lose, and only treat the aggregate relief, which is £3,000,000, and not £5,500,000.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he had been treating of the subventions which Ireland did not get.

MR. GOSCHEN: Ireland gets other subventions which England does not get. At any rate, I would invite the hon. and gallant Gentleman to discuss with me the question of the sum paid by England and Ireland. Although, in the case of some special grants, Ireland may not have the same proportion that England and Scotland enjoy, in other directions Ireland is enjoying much larger grants. I think the hon. and gallant Member has done me justice in this matter as regards my intentions; and I will only say that I am anxious to bring about an equitable adjustment between the two countries. When a pro-

per time comes, I shall be perfectly prepared to confer with my hon. and gallant Friend on the subject, because, as I have repeatedly asserted, that I look upon it as extremely important that Ireland should feel that, whatever differences of political opinion may exist, she is treated by this country—her richer sister, with whom I hope she will always remain indissolubly united—with all the consideration which her poorer circumstances deserve. The proportion I have estimated as due to Ireland I have arrived at after careful consideration.

COLONEL NOLAN: On what statistics are the proportions made out?

MR. GOSCHEN: From a Return presented to the House not long ago. I have consulted all the Returns prepared by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), when he wished to adjust the taxation between the countries in connection with his Home Rule scheme, and I have arrived at the best results it was in my power to arrive at. As I say, it is my earnest desire to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite and their constituents that they are fairly treated in this matter. I will give them every opportunity of examining and criticizing our calculations, and, if necessary, I should be perfectly ready to reconsider them if they wish me to do so. The hon. and gallant Gentleman made some reference to the £50,000 which in my proposal in the Budget of last year was handed over to Ireland. He complained that the money has not been spent in a manner which recommended itself to the Representatives of Ireland. A considerable amount of that was given for arterial drainage, and the pressure put upon the Government for the expenditure from the districts where the money has been spent was both very considerable and very persistent. I do not know whether the hon. and gallant Member remembers that in making my first statement I distinctly intimated that the Government would be prepared to listen to any representations that might come from Ireland on the subject; but the offer was treated with some disdain, and we received no assistance whatever from Ireland as to the expenditure of this money. I trust that in the expenditure of the sum of money which will now be placed at the disposal of Ireland we shall receive such assistance as may enable us to apply these grants, which

Colonel Nolan

they had listened to-night with the Budgets which were produced in 1853, 1860, 1861, up to at any rate 1865. Those Budgets aimed at freeing industry and labour from their burdens, at reducing a number of little irritating imposts on various forms of enterprise, and at throwing the burden of taxation as far as was possible and just upon the accumulated wealth of the country. They did their best to reach that goal, and probably it would have been reached by this time had not the progress of the country been interrupted by disastrous wars, and by various changes owing to Government by Party. The right hon. Gentleman was much mistaken if he supposed that those Budgets were forgotten, or that there were not millions of people in this country who looked forward to the resumption of that line of fiscal policy which was marked out by the financial statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Amongst other things, he could not but regret that the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had found no opportunity of reducing or abolishing taxation on what he (Mr. Pictou) must insist had now become the necessities of life—that was to say, such drinks as tea and coffee and cocoa. Hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Party opposite years ago had maintained that these things had become necessities of life. He (Mr. Pictou) certainly thought that taxation on the necessities of life was in the highest degree injudicious. However, he was aware that it was scarcely right to endeavour to discuss at any length the principles involved in the Budget which had been just proposed. He had merely wished to say in a very few words that he most emphatically dissented from the general tendency of the proposals which had been made, and that he hoped to have another opportunity of raising the principles to which he referred, when he trusted that the House would allow them to be discussed.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he was glad to have heard the speech to which they had just listened. The hon. Member seemed to be jealous of any taxation which did not press as much as possible on the rich, and which did not keep as far as possible from trade and the working classes. To his (Mr. C. W. Gray's) mind the Budget

which had been produced this afternoon was certainly a more favourable Budget to that great branch of trade, agriculture, than any Budget which had been heard of in this House for many years past. He was sure that many an agricultural labourer and many a little village tradesman and shopkeeper when he heard of this Budget would say—“Well, though we will not admit that this is a remedy for agricultural depression, we do give the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer credit for having done what he could under the circumstances.” Not very long ago he (Mr. C. W. Gray) had had the pleasure of being at a public meeting in the town which the hon. Member had the honour of representing with his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), who held out to the people of Leicester that it would be a good thing to reduce the tax upon tea; but at the same time it was pointed out that taxes must come from somewhere or other, and that when the tax on tea was reduced, it would be well to make up the loss to the revenue by taxing certain foreign articles of luxury. They heard to-night that champagne was to be taxed. Not only champagne, but silks, satins and laces, which were articles of luxury used by the rich, would bear taxation, and he hoped in time would become a source of revenue, whilst tea and such necessities would be taxed less and less. To leave these parts of the subject, before he sat down he begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having done what he could under the circumstances. He hoped that some day a great deal more would be effected, but he was sure that the agriculturists would be glad to hear that brewers' drays, millers' waggons, and such like heavy vehicles, which cut up the roads and added so much to the cost of keeping them in repair, were now going to bear some share of that cost. Those of them who were yeomen farmers would be glad to know that they were in future to be treated under Schedule A of the Income Tax in a straightforward way, and that if they were farming, and the farms they were farming did not pay, they would not be called upon to pay Income Tax upon that part of their business.

the opposition which was offered to it; but I hope to be able to introduce it again, and to be able to gain the general assent of the House of Commons to my proposal, and against the opposition which will certainly be raised on behalf of the vested interests of a great many people. This is a kind of proposal which brings a great number of Town Clerks up to the Metropolis, who bring influence to bear upon their Members, and sometimes, what I think, a fictitious opposition is, in this way, raised to legitimate proposals which really commend themselves to the general sense of the House. It will be a considerable reform to place the collection of the Income Tax in the hands of officers of the Inland Revenue; but, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton knows, the proposition is one which will evoke a great deal of opposition. I am reminded by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury that it is now in the power of Local Authorities to adopt the system, but it is better that some compulsory method should be adopted by Parliament once for all than that Local Authorities should be left to struggle with it from time to time. Then with regard to the imposition of an annual tax upon foreign securities, an hon. Member asks me whether securities which have paid the duty of 10s. will be liable to this tax? No, Sir; such securities will not be liable. Once they have paid the 10s. tax, they are supposed to have compounded for the transfer duty for ever. I think that is a very cheap composition. The issue tax is 2s. 6d., and for the additional 7s. 6d. it has been considered that the bonds of any Corporation or State should be free from the toll on passing from hand to hand, and we will not disturb that arrangement. There is only one other question I have left unanswered. We are asked if we will not exempt from licence duty pedlars as well as hawkers? No, Sir; I have not yet come to the conclusion that that tax should be repealed. The case of the hawkers has been specially brought to my notice, and it seems that, having dealt with that, a claim is set up on behalf of another class of persons who consider themselves almost similarly situated. I cannot admit that their claim can be established, but it will be for the House of Commons

to consider the matter on a future occasion. I must once more, in conclusion, apologize to the right hon. Gentleman opposite for not having dilated on certain figures; but if I had gone more fully into detail on some points I should have been obliged to trouble the Committee at a length which, notwithstanding their extremely kind indulgence, would have been trespassing too much on their patience.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he could quite sympathize with the natural desire of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, after his wonderful exertion this evening, to bring this informal discussion to a conclusion; but he (Mr. Picton) might be pardoned if he could not allow the discussion to end without uttering a word of dissent. He could join with hon. Members who preceded him in admiration of the lucidity with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put before them the most complicated proposals—a lucidity which, to his mind, was perfectly wonderful, because it enabled even him, who was puzzled by such things generally, to follow the statement almost throughout with the greatest ease. But however he might admire the faculties which enabled the right hon. Gentleman to set such a statement before the House, he could not but regret their use for such a purpose. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman's proposals looked like a retrograde movement. He set interest against interest, instead of taking a broad view of the welfare of the whole Commonwealth. They had to consider the case of pedlars as against hawkers, of two-wheeled vehicles against four-wheeled vehicles, and the case of various little licences one against the other. He could not help thinking that all these little irritating taxes must necessarily be annoying to the community. They require expenditure on their collection, and they interposed many hindrances in the way of trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was only a short time ago regarded as a rising prophet of the great school of financiers, of which the chief luminary for generations past had been the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). Now, they could not help contrasting the Budget—able as it was—to which

Mr. Goschen

they had listened to-night with the Budgets which were produced in 1853, 1860, 1861, up to at any rate 1865. Those Budgets aimed at freeing industry and labour from their burdens, at reducing a number of little irritating imposts on various forms of enterprise, and at throwing the burden of taxation as far as was possible and just upon the accumulated wealth of the country. They did their best to reach that goal, and probably it would have been reached by this time had not the progress of the country been interrupted by disastrous wars, and by various changes owing to Government by Party. The right hon. Gentleman was much mistaken if he supposed that those Budgets were forgotten, or that there were not millions of people in this country who looked forward to the resumption of that line of fiscal policy which was marked out by the financial statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Amongst other things, he could not but regret that the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had found no opportunity of reducing or abolishing taxation on what he (Mr. Pictou) must insist had now become the necessities of life—that was to say, such drinks as tea and coffee and cocoa. Hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Party opposite years ago had maintained that these things had become necessities of life. He (Mr. Pictou) certainly thought that taxation on the necessities of life was in the highest degree injudicious. However, he was aware that it was scarcely right to endeavour to discuss at any length the principles involved in the Budget which had been just proposed. He had merely wished to say in a very few words that he most emphatically dissented from the general tendency of the proposals which had been made, and that he hoped to have another opportunity of raising the principles to which he referred, when he trusted that the House would allow them to be discussed.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, he was glad to have heard the speech to which they had just listened. The hon. Member seemed to be jealous of any taxation which did not press as much as possible on the rich, and which did not keep as far as possible from trade and the working classes. To his (Mr. C. W. Gray's) mind the Budget

which had been produced this afternoon was certainly a more favourable Budget to that great branch of trade, agriculture, than any Budget which had been heard of in this House for many years past. He was sure that many an agricultural labourer and many a little village tradesman and shopkeeper when he heard of this Budget would say—“Well, though we will not admit that this is a remedy for agricultural depression, we do give the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer credit for having done what he could under the circumstances.” Not very long ago he (Mr. C. W. Gray) had had the pleasure of being at a public meeting in the town which the hon. Member had the honour of representing with his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), who held out to the people of Leicester that it would be a good thing to reduce the tax upon tea; but at the same time it was pointed out that taxes must come from somewhere or other, and that when the tax on tea was reduced, it would be well to make up the loss to the revenue by taxing certain foreign articles of luxury. They heard to-night that champagne was to be taxed. Not only champagne, but silks, satins and laces, which were articles of luxury used by the rich, would bear taxation, and he hoped in time would become a source of revenue, whilst tea and such necessities would be taxed less and less. To leave these parts of the subject, before he sat down he begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having done what he could under the circumstances. He hoped that some day a great deal more would be effected, but he was sure that the agriculturists would be glad to hear that brewers' drays, millers' waggons, and such like heavy vehicles, which cut up the roads and added so much to the cost of keeping them in repair, were now going to bear some share of that cost. Those of them who were yeomen farmers would be glad to know that they were in future to be treated under Schedule A of the Income Tax in a straightforward way, and that if they were farming, and the farms they were farming did not pay, they would not be called upon to pay Income Tax upon that part of their business.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): You are not a tenant farmer.

Mr. C. W. GRAY said, the hon. Member for East Donegal, who was, no doubt, renowned for his knowledge of nearly every subject touched on in this House—though in this case the exception proved the rule—had told him (Mr. C. W. Gray) that he was not a tenant farmer. That was not the fact. He was a tenant farmer, and he rented just about as many acres as those which he owned.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the point of his remark was that, if the hon. Member came under Schedule A as an owner, he would be exonerated, but not as a tenant farmer.

Mr. C. W. GRAY said, he must explain that hitherto when these persons who were farming their own land—persons who were known in England as yeomen farmers—under the disastrous circumstances which to-day surrounded agriculture, were not able to make any profit from the land, they had not received any relief under Schedule A, but now the Chancellor of the Exchequer said to them—"Provided yours is a *bonâ fide* business, and that you cultivate not merely a model farm or a pleasure farm, you should have relief." He thanked the right hon. Gentleman very much for what he proposed to do.

Mr. MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) congratulated the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the great satisfaction which he believed would be given to the agricultural classes, and to the farmers especially, who were the most suffering class in the country. He believed it would give them satisfaction to see heavy vans taxed, and it would also give them especial satisfaction to see a tax put upon champagne, which was a beverage which in their bad times they had themselves little chance of indulging in. He wished, however, to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to one omission in his speech. Many farmers had been looking forward with great interest to some further statement from Government with regard to the promised subsidy to agricultural and dairy schools. Many farmers were looking forward to the establishment of those schools, but the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing about them.

He (Mr. More) wished to get some assurance from the Government that they were still regarding this question with the interest with which the farmers looked upon it. He should like to know whether the fact that the subject had not been mentioned was due to the fact that the Government thought it could be more fittingly dealt with on some future occasion. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) had promised them the other night an instalment of £5,000 for the purpose of agricultural dairy schools. The opinion of the agricultural classes was that that amount would not go very far. The proposal as to this grant had been attacked by some writers in the public Press, because it was thought that the establishment of large Government schools would interfere with the undertakings of some professors who had established private schools, but the object those who advocated the grant had in view was to cheapen the education for our small farmers' sons, and not to affect the colleges at all. He (Mr. More) had no wish to trespass on the time of the House, and he only asked for an assurance from the Government that this matter was one to which they intended to devote some attention.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he wished to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of those people living in the country who kept horses. He agreed that people in towns who kept horses and carriages kept them for the purpose of luxury, and no doubt they ought to be taxed; but agriculturists were obliged to keep horses, it was a necessary for them. He understood that agricultural horses were to be exempted from the tax, but the right hon. Gentleman should remember that the farmer was obliged to keep other horses—for instance, the nag which took him to market, and on which he rode about the farm. He should like to know whether such horses as those were to be exempted from the tax, for even if the tax were only £1 1s. it would be an amount which it would be very hard for a struggling agriculturist to pay in these days. The farmer was the very man who paid the rates in the country—who was already overcharged—for the maintenance of the roads, and he was the

very man who ought to be exempted from the horse tax. An hon. Gentleman opposite had referred to the taxing of tenants under Schedule A, and he (Mr. Jeffreys) thought the hon. Gentleman did not quite understand that Schedule A was the landlord's tax and Schedule B the tenant's tax. Men who farmed their own land, as he (Mr. Jeffreys) and as his hon. Friend the Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. O. W. Gray) did, had to pay two taxes. They first of all had to pay the landlord's tax under Schedule A, and then they had to pay the tenant's tax under Schedule B. That had been found a great hardship, and it was only right that it should be cut off. A man had often been obliged to pay upon a supposed income, when in these times he may not have earned anything. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the relief he had given to the agriculturists, and trusted he would extend this relief by exempting all *bonâ fide* agriculturists from the payment of this horse tax.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he heartily joined in the feeling which had been expressed in all parts of the House of admiration of the lucid manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made his statement this evening. He did not propose for a moment to criticize the right hon. Gentleman's statement, which required very careful consideration; but there were two points on which he wished for some further information. In the earlier part of his speech the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the great increase which had taken place in local taxation during the last 10 years, and he justified on that ground the very great change which he proposed to make in taxation. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman was well aware that the increase had not occurred altogether in purely rural districts, and he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was afraid in saying this that his remarks would not perhaps altogether meet with the approbation of hon. Members opposite. A great deal of the increase had arisen in the Metropolis and the urban districts. In the Report signed by the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) it was

set forth that 67 per cent of the increase had occurred in the Metropolis, while 59 per cent had occurred in urban districts, and only 12 per cent in the rural districts. He did not raise any question as to whether or not this increase of 12 per cent in the rural districts was not an important increase, but he wanted to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Metropolis and urban districts whose taxation had been so enormously increased were to get their full and fair share of the proposed relief. The other point he wished to call attention to was with reference to the adjustment which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to make between the two great classes of property in bearing the burden of Imperial taxation—real and personal property. If he understood the right hon. Gentleman aright, he said that the time had arrived when the two questions ought to be dealt with together. The owners of real property were not confined to the squirearchy—there were the owners of houses in boroughs to be considered. There was house property in towns, and the burden upon owners of real property so situated was quite as great as in the rural districts. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that while he was adjusting the inequalities on the one side he was ready to adjust them on the other. He did not understand how the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to deal with Succession Duty. If he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) was correct, personal property paid, with one exception, two taxes upon death, the Probate Duty and the Legacy Duty. When a property was bequeathed from a father to a child there was no Legacy Duty payable. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) when he altered the Probate Duty from 2½ to 3 per cent, raised the half per cent for covering that case, so that in a case where personal property was bequeathed to a child it paid one duty, the 3 per cent duty, and that was all. But where the property was bequeathed to a collateral, such as a brother or a sister, or other collateral relative, or a stranger, there were two duties to be paid, first the Probate Duty and then the Legacy Duty. He remembered when the case was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

Mid Lothian the right hon. Gentleman gave them as the Report of the Inland Revenue officials that in 7-12ths of the cases the property descended from father to child, and in 5-12ths to others—to collaterals or strangers. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) understood, proposed simply to deal with the Succession Duty, which was equivalent to the Legacy Duty and not to Probate Duty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) raised the point and said that the whole question would have to be considered with regard to the incidence of these two forms of taxation, one being on the *corpus* and the other on the life interest. The right hon. Gentleman will, therefore, probably throw some further light on the subject.

Mr. S. HOARE (Norwich): I trust it will be in the power of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to hold out some hope that in the case of horses engaged on farms perhaps not entirely in agricultural work, there will be no licence. But I go further, and express the hope that since the Government have been offering inducements for the breeding of horses, that in the case of horses used for breeding throughout the country there will be some relief to those engaged in breeding horses, and that, at any rate, duty will not be placed upon the horses until they arrive at a certain age. I think this is a tax which will tell hardly on some agricultural districts, and I shall be glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer can consider the case. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) has spoken of this as a retrograde Budget; but I should think it is one of the most progressive Budgets ever brought into this House. For the first time it is proposed that personal and real property shall be amalgamated to reduce the burden of the country, and I cannot but consider that this is a great step, and one which will make a great difference to the poorer portion of the community. It may be that they wish to see the duty on tobacco reduced, as was done last year, but I cannot understand how the hon. Member can suppose that the Budget is one which affects poor people unfairly. It seems to me that all the various duties which have been increased will fall almost entirely

Mr. Henry H. Fowler

upon another class; even if we enter on that part of it which is connected with the Local Government question, we shall find that it falls principally upon the keepers of horses and the users of wheels, and we find that the methods by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets the means of reducing the Income Tax is distinctly connected with the wealthier classes of the country. I am very glad that the duty on contract notes is to be 6d. instead of 1d., and I believe this will also be the feeling of the London Stock Exchange, because there are many people who will be affected that under assumed names get people to engage in doubtful operations; and I believe if the stamp were made heavier the proposal would not meet with much opposition. I am afraid that the tax on American Railway Securities will be found to present some difficulties with regard to its collection, but, at the same time, I think it is a fair and right tax; at any rate it does not affect the poor people of the country, none of whom probably hold foreign securities. I was glad to hear that the Chancellor of the Exchequer realized that in many cases it was found that the Stamp Duties were evaded, and I am certain there are other cases than he has dealt with where the Government ought to receive more money than they do from stamps. At the same time I should be sorry that the temporary transactions of men of business should be in any way interfered with by a straining of the law. Then it cannot be said that the tax on bottled wines affects the working classes, and so far, therefore, from this being a retrograde Budget it is—and I believe the people of the country will so consider it—very much the contrary. At any rate, if they are not satisfied with what is in the future, they will be entirely satisfied with the past, when they see the grand surplus which the right hon. Gentleman has been able to put before the House. I think they will take courage when they see that there are no supplemental charges for the Army and Navy, and have confidence in the financial administration of the country at the present time.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) I think we may fairly congratulate Her Majesty's Government on the fact that we have got free from

those little wars which have prevented our having a surplus for many years past; and I also wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his looking to the taxation of realized property rather than to the earnings of the people. I am bound to say that I do not wholly agree with the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) in saying that the Budget of the right hon. Gentleman is open to objection from the point of view of the poorer classes of the people. As regards the taxation on horses and carts, I am inclined to agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But I rise principally to say that I looked with great interest on the long-promised cessation of the Imperial subventions in aid of local taxation. It does not, however, seem to me that there is any real cessation of subventions for local purposes; the change appears to be only nominal; when we are told that certain taxes are to be made over to the Local Authorities, the change seems to be only one of account, though there might be a change in the manner of distribution. Again, it seems to me that the old hereditary burdens on land have been to a great degree shuffled off while new burdens have been imposed. There is one point on which I desire some information. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he proposes to buy up and put an end to the capital value of the Suez Canal shares in order that the profits may be unencumbered. I do not understand how it is proposed to raise the money with which to buy up these shares, and the right hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, give the Committee some further information on this point.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that he is prepared for a bombardment on many subjects dealt with in his speech. I shall address myself to one point alone, and can assure the right hon. Gentleman that this is only a preliminary bombardment. The right hon. Gentleman said he proposed to reimpose or rather increase the duty formerly paid on race horses. If my right hon. Friend thinks it right or necessary to reimpose the duty which the greatest of Conservative leaders repealed since I have been a Member of this House, I have nothing to say further than that

the tax of £5 per head will be paid without a murmur. But allow me to say that this tax will not produce a very large amount of revenue, because my own recollections remind me that in former days there were probably not more than 1,500 or 2,000 horses engaged in racing, and, therefore, I think the revenue which the right hon. Gentleman expects to derive from this source must be regarded as a doubtful factor in this calculation. The right hon. Gentleman told us in a marked manner that brood mares and foals would be exempted from this taxation, and I wish to ask him whether stallions are to be included in this exemption, because, if not, I can conceive nothing more inconsistent than my right hon. Friend's proposal. It is only two months ago that the right hon. Gentleman—with a generosity and liberality that I hardly anticipated from him—came forward with a proposal to appoint a Royal Commission, and consented to the expenditure of £5,000 a-year for the encouragement of horse-breeding in this country. That Commission was appointed, and I have had the honour of being a member of it; we have devoted some attention to the subject—I hope not altogether with bad results—and we have submitted proposals, some of which have been carried out. If my right hon. Friend is not going to exempt stallions, I ask what is the definition he is going to place on "pleasure horses?" Are they riding and driving horses? I imagine that he means that all horses used for the purpose of riding or driving and which are not used in trade are those which he describes as pleasure horses. But what does that involve? Is a horse on which a farmer rides round his farm to be considered a pleasure horse, and as such to be liable to the tax? I would point out that the horse which a farmer uses to ride round his farm is frequently a clever four or five year old, which he either proposes to sell or use for hunting. Is it the horse he drives to market? Because, if so, it is often a horse that he proposes to sell at a high price, for harness, especially if he is bred in Norfolk, and got by a Norfolk trotter. I want to put this in all earnestness before my right hon. Friend. All the pleasure horses in this country are bred by the agriculturists and farmers of Great

Britain and Ireland—and of Ireland, perhaps, more than England. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] Certainly the best horses I ever rode came from Ireland. An hon. Member says “No,” but I can assure him that Ireland is celebrated, perhaps, for its horses more than anything else. If the right hon. Gentleman is going to impose £1 a-head on all pleasure horses in the country, he will be inflicting an injury on the farmers and breeders of Great Britain and Ireland, and interfering with the breeding of horses in the future, and he will, moreover, counteract the good effect which we expect to derive from his liberality of two months ago. I was amazed at hearing a Member of Her Majesty’s Government making this proposal, and I was surprised at what seemed to me to be the lack of knowledge on the subject. But, when I looked along the Treasury Bench from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the First Lord of the Treasury and the row of Ministers who are sitting there to-night, I came to the conclusion that there was not a single man amongst them who knew a horse from a cow. I hope, therefore, I shall be excused for calling attention to this subject on the present occasion; but I give the right hon. Gentleman the most friendly warning and intimation that if this proposal is persevered in, it will meet with certain opposition from this Bench.

MR. GOSCHEN: I think I may now proceed to deal with some of the questions which have been addressed to me by hon. Members, and I will commence with the question of my right hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). It will be, I think, an interesting sight, when my right hon. Friend commences to bombard, not me, for the Exchequer is not concerned in this, but to bombard the Representatives of the ratepayers with regard to the tax on horses. I have pointed out that this tax will not affect the Imperial Revenue, but the mass of the ratepayers of the country and their Representatives will have to fight out the question, whether stallions are to be included in the exemption, with my right hon. Friend. I shall watch, with interest not untinged with a certain amount of amusement, the battle that will be waged over the question whether it is better to pay higher rates or place a duty on horses.

Mr. Chaplin

The right hon. Gentleman has pointed out the difficulty in deciding exactly what is and what is not a pleasure horse. There is one way in which the difficulty can be avoided and that is by making the tax one of 10s. on every horse as it used to be, instead of £1 on each pleasure horse as is now proposed. Does my right hon. Friend prefer that every horse should be taxed? [MR. CHAPLIN: No.] Where then is the anxiety for the reduction of rates of which we have so often heard? We wish to relieve the burdens of those who have no horses and make those who have contribute to the general relief; but if the hon. Gentleman prefers to continue to pay a higher highway rate and have no tax on horses, the difficulty will be not between my right hon. Friend and myself, but between him and the advocates of the reduction of rates. I can assure him, although he says there is no one on this Bench who understands the difference between a horse and a cow, that there is the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) who is, perhaps, competent to speak on these matters, I will not say as the representative of the Jockey Club, but as representing the genial common sense of the country squire. We have had the opportunity of consulting with him and a certain number of gentlemen representing country interests who have taken a view of this matter different from that of my right hon. Friend. With regard to the tax of £5 on race-horses, I think that horses like Hermit can very well bear the tax, and as to the tax on stallions which has so greatly excited my right hon. Friend, I cannot conceive, looking to the great value of those interesting animals, that a duty of £1 a-year is likely to diminish to the smallest extent either their usefulness or their patriotic endeavours, or in the slightest degree to conflict with the desire to promote an improved breed of horses in the country. The tax is, no doubt, heavy on those who, like many country doctors and clergymen, keep a single horse, and I regret this more in their case than in the case of those who keep a larger number of horses. I believe what you may call the breeding horse will be able to bear the tax. At the same time it is for my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin), as I have said, to fight the matter out with the ratepayers and convince them

it is better not to impose this tax, and to leave the rates so much higher in consequence of its non-imposition. I have been asked several questions with regard to other matters connected with horses. I presume there will be exemption in favour of the horses which are connected with the Military Services, including the Volunteer Service; that no horses which are legitimately and avowedly kept for the purpose of the Public Service will fall under the tax. But it is a matter which will require examination. All these matters will have to be most carefully considered, and I shall with pleasure hand over the discussion of this subject to my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), who is far more interested in the maintenance of this tax than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has had the misfortune to propose the tax and to incur the displeasure of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin), while he is not to derive a single penny's advantage from the taxation of racehorses or any other horses.

[An hon. MEMBER: There are the farmers' horses.] The horses engaged in trade and husbandry will be exempt from the tax. The interesting animal of which we have heard so much to-night—namely, the farmer's cob, which does a certain amount of work, but which is sometimes used for purposes of amusement, offers some difficulties, and the case is undoubtedly one for consideration. But I trust that the Committee may find it possible to retain the duty of £1 upon all horses which, speaking broadly and from a common-sense point of view, may be described as the horses belonging to well-to-do people. I trust the Committee will rather retain the duty of £1 upon such horses than force us to the alternative, the old alternative of imposing a tax of 10s. 6d. upon every horse. The Committee will with its wisdom and the assistance of the representatives of all the horse breeding, horse racing and other horse interests, be able to arrive at a competent conclusion in the matter. Of course, cab horses and 'bus horses will come within the category of trade horses. My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) dwelt upon a far drier subject than that of the breeding of horses, namely

—the question of the allocation of the licence duties. I agree with him that it is expedient that the Local Authorities should have as much power as possible in the collecting and in the administering of the licences. My hon. Friend omitted to notice that, in the first instance, we hand over as a trial to these new authorities the administration of public house licences, and, I think, the new authorities will find their hands pretty well full during their first year of office with the innumerable difficulties that arise with regard to this class of licences.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: The proposal will not pass.

MR. GOSCHEN: My hon. Friend says the proposal will not pass. I feel certain that the proposal to transfer licences to the Local Authorities will be adopted, and that both sides of the House will agree that licensing should not remain in the hands of a judicial body, such as the Quarter Sessions will be in the future, but should be transferred to the administrative body, which will be the new Councils elected by the voice of the people. We have every confidence we shall be able to carry the proposal to transfer licensing to the new authorities. But my hon. Friend will see that the Bill which he will be able to obtain to-night, and which, with his enormous industry, he will have mastered before to-morrow morning, provides that in the case of all licences the localities may ultimately undertake the collection. We have proceeded upon the principle that in the earlier stages of their existence it would be wise not to overload these new Councils. They will have their hands quite full enough during their first years of office with the duties which have been specially confided to their care; but as years roll on we trust that these County Authorities may take in hand the collection of other licences besides public-house licences. Of course, we cannot allow them to raise or reduce general licences, because otherwise you might have some poor county, some small county, setting up a system of cheap licensing, which would attract people from all parts of the country to buy their licences in that particular county to the disadvantage of other counties. We cannot, therefore, allow any variation of the rates, but we will encourage

to the utmost Local Authorities to take into their hands the whole of the finances of their district. It is quite possible the result may be, that the money is not collected so cheaply as it is now by the Central Authorities. It is impossible to exaggerate the enormous number of questions which have grown up round all these licences—questions of law, questions of practice, questions of exemption, with which the Inland Revenue are now perfectly familiar, and with which the new authorities will gradually have to make themselves acquainted. But I am personally so strongly impressed with the advisability and expediency of large duties and responsibilities being imposed on the Local Authorities, that I should be glad, even if the expense should be somewhat increased, that the powers of these new County Councils should be, from year to year, more and more developed, and that these bodies should relieve the central administration of that over work which we all deplore. I am, therefore, agreed with my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) that we should do our utmost in every way to make the transfer of the collection of revenue a real change, enlisting the whole sympathies of the country on behalf of the revenue which will go to the counties, exemptions which are now pleaded for on insufficient grounds will then cease, evasions which are now winked at will then be punished. I trust I have satisfied my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) so far as intention goes, at all events. We wish to make this a real and not a nominal transfer, though, in the first instance, we may have to proceed with caution. The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) considered this a retrograde Budget. He alluded to the great Budgets of 1853 and 1860. I entirely agree with him it is impossible to equal the great financial achievements of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in those years. I entirely agree with him it is impossible to exaggerate the advantage which the right hon. Gentleman conferred upon the State upon those occasions; but there is another consideration which has been forced upon my mind since the time I have been responsible for the National finances, and even

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before that time, to which I will call the special attention of this Committee and the public. We have been proceeding in the direction of simplicity. We have removed an enormous number of taxes; we have enabled the revenue to be collected more cheaply, perhaps, than the revenue is collected in any other country, because it is concentrated upon a few and great and striking items. But, at the same time, we are resting the whole finance of the country upon a rather narrow basis. We have been looking to some five or six great sources of revenue, and if any of them should break in our hands, we are imperilling the equilibrium of our finance. Now, when I say this, I trust that I shall not be thought to be detracting in the slightest degree from the great achievements of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian; but what is the position of this country as regards taxation? We see that £27,000,000 sterling, an amount more than sufficient to pay the charge on the National Debt, is raised from one source of revenue alone—namely, drink, which is a declining source. Is that not a warning to us that we must not simplify too much, and that we must not rest too much upon a few single items? It is from that point of view that I look upon it as so important to keep in reserve that great engine which we have at our disposal, the Income Tax. I hope I have made it clear, though I may not have convinced the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) that the Imperial policy dictates that we should retain this important engine for emergency, that in times of comparative ease we should seek somewhat to broaden the revenue, so that when the emergency comes we may have in reserve additional resources which we may turn on at any moment, thus greatly strengthening the credit of the country, and greatly strengthening our position in time of peril. I do not complain of the tone of the hon. Member (Mr. Picton), but I say we must not carry simplicity too far, and I should be averse to parting with a single important item of revenue, but we may diminish, and I trust the time may come when we shall be able to diminish, the amount of some of the taxes which rest upon some articles of consumption, without parting with the taxes themselves. The

duty on tobacco is very high, indeed, compared with the value of the article. But, nevertheless, we can only deal with the few great articles of consumption which are still taxed, when we are in a position to approach the question in a broad spirit. It is not desirable to disturb them from year to year, and I, therefore, consider what I have said a good defence for not having touched any of these most important sources of revenue to which the hon. Member (Mr. Picton) alluded. It would be gratifying to be able to reduce the taxation upon these articles, but we must look to the taxation of the country as a whole, and we must not, without great thought, give up any of our great sources of revenue. I have still to deal with the remarks which were made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler.) He challenged me, with perfect fairness, upon two points. He challenged me with regard to the incidence of local taxation as between town and country, and he challenged me with regard to the Succession Duty. Dealing with the first point, I fully admit that the boroughs, especially where there is a large population of indoor poor, have as strong claims upon us as the country districts have. I admit that a large portion of the relief which is given ought to be given to the boroughs, and it is given to the boroughs. The criticism I have seen made upon our plan is that the assistance given to the boroughs is larger than it ought to be in proportion to the relief we give to the counties. The right hon. Gentleman says that the rates have increased far more in boroughs than they have in the country districts. So they have, but then I ask the right hon. Gentleman, have the boroughs not got more in return for their increased rating than the country districts have got for their money? There are the sanitary rates, there are the rates which have gone to beautify the towns, which have established free libraries, which have added to the amenities and pleasures of the working classes in the great centres of industry. I am glad from many points of view that boroughs have increased their rates, because the rates are remunerative in a different sense to the rates imposed in country districts; and the boroughs may

fairly claim that personal property should contribute towards all the great social reforms which we rejoice to see in so many of our cities, because why should such reforms be carried out at the expense of one class of contributors only? It is perfectly right that the possessors of realized personalty should contribute to the rates which have been imposed, and which have, I trust, conferred great benefits upon a large portion of the community. But then it must be remembered that there is no town which has heavy rates imposed upon it that will not be benefited by the relief we are affording, just as we trust that there is no corner of the agricultural districts that will not feel that, by one means or another, we have been able in this year to remove a portion of that intolerable burden which has been increasing on their shoulders for so many years. The right hon. Gentleman says that the increased burden has not been so great upon country districts as upon towns; but I appeal to him whether the increased burden must not be felt more by the depressed industry of the agricultural portion of the community than it is felt by those thriving centres of industry which have been able to do so much for their inhabitants by means of their increased rates. It is far more difficult for the agricultural community, in view of the fall in prices, in view of the depression of agriculture, which we all deplore—it is far more difficult for them to bear an increase, even if it be a smaller increase in rates, than it is for other portions of the country. So I trust the right hon. Gentleman, while I hope he will take it from me there is no borough that will not be benefited by the proposals we make, will not grudge to the suffering agricultural communities the relief which we hope will also flow to them from the proposals which we have had the honour to submit. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to another point, on which, I admit, I did not give sufficient explanation—I mean the position of the Succession Duty and the Probate Duty. I dealt too exclusively with lineals, and I did not speak enough of the position of collaterals. I think the right hon. Gentleman entirely appreciates the first part of our proposal, which is this, that the Probate Duty for Imperial purposes is positively reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent,

the other $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent going in relief of local burdens. It is admitted that personal property does not contribute enough to these local burdens; and, therefore, I put it to the Committee in this way. We remit $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the Probate Duty from Imperial purposes, and we add so much to the Succession Duty as will equal that amount of Probate Duty which is retained for Imperial purposes. The Imperial Probate Duty will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Succession Duty will be raised by $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the case of lineals, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ in that of collaterals, and it will stand exactly on the same footing as the Probate Duty and the Legacy Duty after the Probate Duty has been reduced by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. A nephew inheriting personal property will pay 3 per cent Legacy Duty and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent Probate Duty— $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and a nephew inheriting Real Property will pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent Succession Duty. We have levelled down in this sense that personal property is to contribute less to Imperial taxation and more to local taxation; and, on the other hand, we have levelled up, because we say that real property is to contribute somewhat more to Imperial taxation while receiving relief in respect to local taxation. And now I think I have dealt with all the questions that have been addressed to me. I am deeply grateful to the Committee for the manner in which they have generally received the Budget, and to my political opponents for the extremely courteous manner in which they have expressed themselves towards me. I acknowledge that our proposals will have to be examined with the greatest care. I acknowledge that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are entitled to consider not only the coming year, but the year after next, and to press us, as they have, as to the means by which the deficit is to be met. On the other hand, I ask that we may be judged with indulgence. We have difficulties imposed upon us by reason of having to deal with the relief of local taxation, not in this year only, but for future years. That we shall be able to meet right hon. Gentlemen opposite I trust. We will endeavour to meet them in the same spirit in which they have treated us this evening; in a spirit, not of violent political controversy, but of anxiety to secure that the great changes we are

making in the relations between local and Imperial taxation may be carried out equitably to all the interests involved. I trust that these changes may be effected without evoking any violent political differences. Both sides of the House are equally pledged and equally interested in endeavouring to do justice between the two great classes who contribute to Imperial and local burdens—the ratepayers on the one hand, and the taxpayers on the other hand.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I need not say how thoroughly I am inclined to join in the expression of congratulation to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the lucidity and the interesting character of the Statement he has laid before the Committee. That which interested me most in his Statement was the account the right hon. Gentleman was able to give of his stewardship during the year which has passed. He was able to show not only a larger sum in the shape of Revenue than he had looked forward to, but he was able to show that the Votes passed by Parliament for the Army and Navy Services had not been exceeded. I attribute that entirely to the watchfulness and the good husbandry of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, fortified, as he was beforehand, by the efforts in favour of economy made by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). But I think the credit which he attempted to give to the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) and to the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) was scarcely merited. The House will remember that no less a sum than something over £30,000,000 sterling is, in time of profound peace, voted for the Army and Navy Services, and that within a very short period of time when a Vote of Credit of many millions was granted by this House for those two Services. One thing disappointed me very much in the Statement, and that was, that when aid was given to local taxation for local purposes, that aid was drawn entirely from personalty and not from realty. The right hon. Gentleman has appropriated one-half of the Probate Duty in aid of local resources; but there are many forms of property throughout the

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country which at present bring in immense incomes to the owners, but which contribute nothing to the local resources. There are such things as ground rents. They would have been a much better source from which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might draw his aid for local resources than the Probate Duty. As in manufacturing centres, and in large centres of population, so in the country districts where mining is carried on, you have immense incomes drawn from the mines of the country in the shape of royalties and way-leave rents which now contribute not one single penny to the local resources. Let me take the case of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the single county of Durham. They draw £130,000 a-year in the shape of royalties from the coal mines in Durham, and they are able also to charge some £37,000 a-year on account of way-leave rents. How much did these Ecclesiastical Commissioners contribute to the local expenditure in Durham? Nothing, or next to nothing. Now I say, that ground rents and royalties and way-leave rents and charges of that kind may be fairly taxed for local purposes. The right hon. Gentleman deplored the narrow basis upon which the present financial system rests. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman broaden the basis of his financial system until the natural foundation—that is, the land of the country—is that upon which it rests? He, of all Chancellors of the Exchequer, should do so. There was a lawgiver of some 4,000 years ago who provided a financial system of the simplest kind. He did not trouble himself about taxes on coffee or dry goods, or this or that article; he initiated a simple system of taxation of the land, drawing contributions from every portion of the soil, from occupier and owner. If the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to adjust his Budget to the exemplar of his countryman and predecessor, he then might claim that he was broadening the basis of the taxation of the country. But the right hon. Gentleman appears to be suffering under that restraint that affects all Finance Ministers of his Party. Throughout the Budget it could be seen plainly enough how difficult it was for a Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Conservative Party to throw any-

thing in the shape of additional burden on owners of land. Occupiers of land they themselves owned, when they adopt farming operations and are unable to make them pay, are discharged from liability under which they now rest under Schedule A. But, then, take the case of farmers under Schedule B—not the owner but the tenant. If his farming is unsuccessful, the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not propose to discharge him from his liability as he proposes to discharge the owner under Schedule A. The right hon. Gentleman said it was open to a farmer to go under the Schedule and present his statement of account—

MR. GOSCHEN: It is practically the same with the owner; he would have to prove that he has made no profit.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Then, why not use the same language? It seemed to me that it was an extraordinary thing to make the difference between owner and occupier, and not a single word was said until that moment as to the necessity of owners furnishing accounts of their transactions. Then, again, when we come to Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman says he does not propose to extend the Carriage Tax to Ireland; but we have not the least objection to that extension. Those who in Ireland drive in carriages belong to a very small and favoured class. Some days ago the right hon. Gentleman said it did not pay the Exchequer to collect the Carriage Tax in Ireland; so now the Carriage Tax is not to be imposed on Ireland, though it is utilized in England, but the wheels of the farmers' carts are to pay a tax of 2s. 6d. apiece. Thus, you find the industrial classes are charged—

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member is under some misapprehension. I do not propose to extend the Wheel Tax or the Horse Tax to Ireland. I have not communicated with my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland on this subject, and am not informed; but if there is a general wish that the Carriage Tax, the Horse Tax, and Wheel Tax should be introduced in Ireland, I consider it a most fair measure.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I am glad to have elicited that from the hon. member's speech.

not to be extended to Ireland, but the Horse and Wheel Taxes were. Well, what we now hear is satisfactory. Then as regards the Succession Duties, the right hon. Gentleman within the last few minutes emphasized his observations in regard to these duties, and shows that in the case of collaterals a further rate will be levied to that levied in the past, so that there will be an approximation to equalization between real property and personalty; but he did not meet the point that was raised from the Front Opposition Bench, that Succession Duty is not paid on the corpus but on the life interest, and so tender is he towards realty on this occasion, that he enacts that the duty shall be paid not in four years, but in eight years. He did not give us to understand that any longer term would be allowed for the Probate Duty than exists already, and I fail to see why this exceptional tenderness is shown in the Succession Duty. Then with regard to the distribution locally of the relief to be given from the Imperial Exchequer, I failed to gather the reason why the amount of local resources spent on indoor relief should be the standard of distribution. See how unequally it will work. In parishes like Kensington and Chelsea, a much larger sum is spent on indoor than on outdoor relief, because the workhouse test is mercilessly applied in those places, and they will, by the very harshness of their administration of the Poor Law, secure a very large haul in the amount of aid to be given from the Imperial Exchequer. But let us go Westward, to Merionethshire, to Devon, to Gloucester, and you may find few cases of indoor relief, a proportion of one to every six, seven, or, in some cases, 10, to every case of outdoor relief. It is in these places that the Poor Law is really most depended upon by the agricultural and industrial working population for relief in their old age, or in times of distress, and these are the places where the smallest share of relief will be enjoyed from this Imperial contribution. On another point, I think, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has missed a great opportunity. He has a surplus of over £2,000,000 of money, and he has a number of small taxes raised upon coffee, raisins, figs, and dried fruits, generally articles which, by reason of these taxes, have shown a

wonderful want of development, and no increase at all in consumption. If the right hon. Gentleman will take the trouble to look through the Trade Returns he will find that of some 15 or 18 articles that were taxed in 1853, every single one has increased in consumption to a surprising extent, except those half-dozen or so upon which the tax is still retained, such as coffee, chicory, and dried fruits. The amount of revenue realized upon these is comparatively insignificant, but the relief from the abolition of the duty would be very sensible. The right hon. Gentleman might have been able to boast that he had established a free breakfast table at last; he had the opportunity, and I am sorry, both on the merits of the case and for his own reputation, that he allowed the opportunity to slip. It is now reserved, I suppose, for some Liberal statesman to deal with. From observations already made, the right hon. Gentleman will gather it is scarcely a satisfactory proposal that the amount of assistance to be derived from the Imperial Exchequer for local taxation in Ireland should be vested in the hands of the Chief Secretary.

MR. GOSCHEN: In the absence of data to go upon, I have not marked out the proposals as regards Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: We have no inkling of the principle of distribution. Evidently, that of indoor relief will not do as a proper standard; and one thing I have been unable to gather, and that is if there is any assurance that the amount of local taxation to be bestowed will equal the amount we lose by the withholding of the grants. If he will work out the figures he has failed to give us, it will be a satisfaction; but it does seem to me very seriously open to doubt whether the grants to be withheld will be equalled by the amount of local assistance we shall get.

MR. GOSCHEN: No grants will be withheld from Ireland. Ireland will continue to receive the grants she has received hitherto, and she will, in addition, be entitled to the relief I have stated. But, as I have said more than once, I have not sufficient information in regard to Ireland and Scotland. I will make it my business to work out these points, and I will make a future

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statement to the House with regard to these two countries. I now wish the Committee to allow me to withdraw the Resolution with regard to the Tea Duty, so that hon. Gentlemen may discuss the general Resolutions on a future occasion. I hope, however, the Committee will allow me to take the Resolution in reference to the duty on wines, which it is urgent to take, for otherwise large transactions will take place without the increased duty.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

2. *Resolved*, That in addition to the Duties of Customs now payable on Wine, there shall, where the Wine is imported in bottles, be charged and paid the Duties following (that is to say):—

Upon every dozen bottles of Wine—	
<i>s. d.</i>	
If in imperial pint bottles or	
bottles of less capacity.. ..	2 6
If in bottles of capacity exceed-	
ing imperial pint bottles and	
not exceeding imperial quart	
bottles	5 0
If in bottles of capacity exceed-	
ing imperial quart bottles a	
proportionate increase of Duty	
according to capacity.	

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Thursday* 5th April.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.—[BILL 165.]

(*Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Secretary*
Matthews, Mr. Jackson.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title).

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, his right hon. Friend on Thursday, when the second reading of the Bill was called, stated that he would not take the Committee stage until after Easter. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) was not present in the House when the second reading was taken on Friday. Still, he did not object to the present stage, though it was inconvenient to have it taken unexpectedly, as it prevented him placing the terms of

his Amendment on the Paper. In this 1st clause he discovered that very objectionable word, in relation to old buildings, "restoration." Now, he understood, from what he heard in the report made to him of his right hon. Friend's observations on Friday, that he assured the House that no money would be expended except on repairs—that was to say, that the Dean and Chapter would not be allowed to indulge their fancies in such ornamentation as their taste might suggest.

THE CHAIRMAN: The 1st clause is simply the title of the Act. I think the right hon. Gentleman's observations relate to a subsequent clause.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: It is in the 1st clause that the word restoration occurs.

THE CHAIRMAN: The 1st clause runs thus:—"This Act may be recited as 'The Westminster Abbey Act, 1888.'"

Clause *agreed to*.

Clause 2 *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Transfer of property of Westminster, Chapter to Ecclesiastical Commissioners).

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he had to propose an Amendment to this clause. The clause provided that schemes were to be ratified by Her Majesty's Order in Council, and then followed the sub-section relating to the principle of the clause. His Amendment was to insert, at the end of Sub-section (6), the words—

"Provided that no such scheme shall be submitted to Her Majesty in Council until it has lain before both Houses of Parliament for the space of two calendar months."

MR. PICTON (Leicester), as a matter of Order, asked would not this prevent any Member making remarks upon previous sub-sections?

THE CHAIRMAN: It will prevent amendment; it will not prevent observation on the clause when moved.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK proceeded. The words of his Amendment were taken from the Union of Benefices Act. When that Act was before the House, many years ago, this Proviso was inserted, and it had been found to be of the greatest possible benefit. It prevented the Bishop of London and others carrying out what were alleged to be

improvements, but which were really no improvements at all, without the consent of the House. For a like public advantage he, in accordance with precedent, proposed this Amendment, so that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should not have the power of passing small Acts without the public having any knowledge or voice in the matter. He was bound to say the Bill seemed carelessly drawn, and not very intelligible in all its parts. This was a matter of very great importance, not only as regarded Westminster Abbey itself, but as establishing a precedent that might be followed in several other similar buildings. His right hon. Friend would do well to admit this Amendment, founded, as it was, on a good precedent.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 22, to add—"Provided that no such scheme shall be submitted to Her Majesty in Council until it has lain before both Houses of Parliament for the space of two calendar months."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (*Mr. W. H. SMITH*) (*Strand, Westminster*) said, his right hon. Friend was under some misapprehension when he said an undertaking was given that the Committee would not be taken until after Easter. He (*Mr. W. H. Smith*) was scrupulous about observing any undertaking of the kind; but he could assure his right hon. Friend that in this case nothing of the kind was given. The proposal in the Amendment would have the effect of impeding the arrangements for the early application of money necessary for the preservation of the Abbey, and lead, in fact, to the decay of the Abbey—a matter of national importance. The clause provided that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should frame a scheme and provide for the expense out of some estates of the Abbey which were to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and he did not think the House of Commons would be possessed of that information to enable it to judge of the value or advantage of such a scheme. No object, indeed, would be gained. Nothing whatever in the clause referred to the mode in which the money was to be applied; it would not touch the scheme, which

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was simply a monetary, he might almost say a commercial, transaction. He therefore hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press an Amendment that, under the circumstances, the Government felt bound to resist.

Mr. PICTON said, the clause, whether amended or not, contained the very essence of the Bill, and therefore he might be permitted to say why, personally adverse, as he was, to the present connection of Church and State, he nevertheless felt that the Bill was necessary and the clause a wise one. The clause recognized the fact that the great Abbey of Westminster was of interest to the whole nation, a national possession; in fact, it transferred property to certain Royal Commissioners in order that they might use the money derived from this property for the purpose, in the first place, of keeping the fabric in repair; next, paying the Dean and Chapter a proper income; and, finally, providing for the services. That he took to be a recognition that the Church was a national possession. It was a possession of which all Englishmen were proud. Whatever might be the differences of opinion on the connection between Church and State, none, he felt sure, would like to see the venerable building falling into disrepair from neglect.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (*Bradford, W.*) said, he would like to ask what security there was that the money which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would provide from the mortgage of the Abbey estates would be wisely expended? Was there any reference to any competent authority, such as the Board of Works, or any responsible architect, to advise and control expenditure, for might it not lead to wasteful patching and jobbing, because admirable ecclesiastics might know nothing of stones and mortar and building repairs?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, provision was made for the supervision of the responsible architect of the Ecclesiastical Commission, *Mr. Ewan Christian*. He would supervise all the work.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing, though he felt bound to say his right hon. Friend had not made out a good case against the Amendment, having regard to the precedent of the Union of Benefices Act,

with which he was afraid his right hon. Friend was not very well acquainted. However, not to occupy time, he would withdraw the Amendment, simply stating that no distinction had been made out between this case and the precedent he had quoted. Before withdrawing it, however, there was one point raised by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Illingworth) that deserved attention. There ought to be a controlling power. His right hon. Friend referred to the fact that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had a responsible architect, and he, no doubt, would discharge his duty wisely. At the same time, it would be well to have a controlling power, and not leave matters in the hands of the architect of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. If the hon. Member could point out any way in which control could be strengthened, he would be very happy indeed to give the hon. Gentleman his support.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clauses 3 to 6, inclusive, *agreed to*.

Clause 7 (Liability to repair, and to pay rates and taxes for official house).

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, this clause really related to the principle touched upon by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Illingworth). Here he found that if any question arose between the Dean and Chapter and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as to the application of the fabric fund, the matter was to be referred to the Lord Chancellor, the Lords of Appeal, the Privy Council, or the Judges of the High Court—

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is now making his observations not on Clause 7, but on Sub-section (7) of Clause 4, which is passed.

Clause *agreed to*.

Clause 8 *agreed to*.

Preamble.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he was right at last, and in the Preamble the word "restoration" did occur. There was the word "restoring," also, in line 17, and he would move the omission of these words, on the ground that they would afford the opportunity for money being expended for other purposes than those of repair. He had frequently stated that he had no con-

fidence in the control of the Dean and Chapter over such expenditure, and he would ask his right hon. Friend whether any of the fund to be produced by this scheme would be applied to the work in the North Transept? Never was expenditure less justified than that on the North Transept. Whether it might be taken as a specimen of what might happen hereafter, he did not know. If this money was, in any way, to be applied to the repair or renewal of the North Transept, it would be a very improper use of the money. That work was pursued in the most blindfold manner, though not by the present authorities at Westminster Abbey. Here he might add a hope that his words might not be taken ill, because of the thin skins of authorities when any act of theirs was criticized. Such criticism was often taken as an exhibition of ill-will, but no one desired less to take up that position than he did. He understood, however, that his right hon. Friend said very distinctly, on Friday, that this Fabric Fund was to be applied to repairs only, and if that was so, there could be no objection to cutting out the word "restoration." Too often had there been examples of the restoration and improvement of old buildings, the result being the very reverse of the description. There had been seen in the noble Cathedral of London what the Dean and Chapter, in spite of protest, could do in the way of structural alteration, and a similar calamity might befall Westminster Abbey unless the words "restoration and improvement" were struck out. Although he had confidence in the present First Lord of the Treasury, and desired that, for the rest of his life, his right hon. Friend might continue to fill the place he now occupied, he might be succeeded by a Minister who would discard his right hon. Friend's statement and take up quite a different attitude. In framing this Act, he would ask that from the Preamble these words should be cut out, and subsequently, or in "another place," the consequential Amendments in other parts of the Bill might be made. He had no wish to prevent the Bill passing Committee that night.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, leave out "restoration or."—(Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Preamble."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he sympathized very much with the protest of his right hon. Friend, but he would call his attention to the fact that the Preamble was simply a recital of what had already been done. A sum of £10,000 was granted in 1866, under an Act for the restoration and repair of Westminster Abbey, and this was a recital of what had been done, and then the Preamble went on to say that, by subsequent enactment in clauses following, the sum so advanced should be made matter of agreement; but what had been done could not be undone.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would withdraw his Amendment to renew it later on in the Preamble, when the word "restoration" occurred in line 6 of page 2.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 6, to leave out the words "restoration and."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Preamble."

MR. W. H. SMITH said, if it were any satisfaction to his right hon. Friend, he would not object to striking out the words from the Preamble that had no enacting value whatever. The Preamble had no enacting value in an Act; it was merely a statement of the general purpose of the Act. If it were any gratification to his right hon. Friend, he would strike the words out; but he could assure him it would not influence the Act, it had no meaning beyond the recognition of the fact that his right hon. Friend would recognize that the Abbey was in immediate want of repair and restoration to what it was. He agreed that the expenditure on the North Transept was much to be regretted; but no such expenditure was contemplated in this proposal; it was simply to place the Abbey in a sound condition, making good the ravages of time and climate.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, having elicited that expression of opinion, which was all he desired to obtain, he would withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. Cavendish Bentinck

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Preamble *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*, without Amendment.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he would suggest that the third reading might now be taken.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, as that was suggested by his right hon. Friend, who was the only Member who had raised any objection to the Bill, perhaps the House would allow the next stage to be taken.

Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

COUNTY COURTS CONSOLIDATION

BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 173.]

(*Mr. Attorney General*.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, he had given Notice of an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, which he did not intend to move, because the Government had agreed that the Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee upon Law. He was very glad that this was so. Many hon. Members of the House would be aware that constant dissatisfaction had been expressed, especially in discussions on the Estimates, with the present condition of the County Court system, and if the present Session should see carried into effect this much needed reform, that alone would redeem it from being a barren Session. Both the powers and procedure of the County Courts needed improving. He deplored that the Bill came down from the other House simply as a Consolidation Bill. There would have been great advantage had the Bill been carefully considered by a Select Committee there. At all events, now that the Standing Committee on Law Bills had been set up, this was a Bill upon which that Committee might very properly exercise its powers, and with great advantage. He understood that Notice of Reference was necessary, and that this would be given for the first day after the Recess?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he agreed to that.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for Thursday 5th April.

MOTIONS.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in rising to move for leave to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, and for other purposes relating thereto, said: There are two pressing questions with regard to the constitution and circumstances of the Land Courts in Ireland which must necessarily be dealt with by the Government during the present Session. The one arises from the accumulation of the arrears of business in the Land Courts, and the other arises from the circumstances that under the Act of 1881 the Land Commission would naturally come to an end in this year. Therefore, if the present system of land tenure is to continue—and without an enormous scheme of land purchase it must continue—it is absolutely necessary that the Government should bring in some Bill by which the existence of that Commission may be further prolonged. Now, the most pressing question, of course, is that with regard to arrears of business in the Land Courts; but it seems to the Government that it may be convenient to deal with two questions at once, not in a very ambitious fashion, but in a manner that will introduce certain improvements that are needed both in the method of dealing with business in the Sub-Commission Courts, and also with reference to the block of business in the Land Commission Courts. This is the object of the Bill which I am about to introduce. Hon. Members who have been present during the last fortnight must be aware that Members from Ireland have, from time to time, expressed their dissatisfaction

with the course which the Government have taken with regard to the arrears of business. But I should first like to show the House that the Government is not really to blame in the matter of arrears of business in the Land Courts. Those who are conversant with what occurred in 1882 are aware that the result of that Act threw an immense mass of business upon the Land Courts, which they were not able to get through for a considerable period. I notice in this connection that hon. Members have been under some misapprehension. They have supposed, as I gather from their speeches, that the Government have been greatly to blame in that they have not earlier taken a step to deal with the accumulated arrears; but an observation of what we have done in the way of appointing Sub-Commissioners will, I think, dissipate that particular prejudice. If the House will compare what happened in 1882 with what is happening at the present moment, they will see that the difficulties which we have undergone were not unknown to our Predecessors. I find that in February, 1882, there were 69,000 cases awaiting hearing. In March and April there were 70,000 cases, and in April the Government increased the number of Sub-Commissioners from 36 to 48. In May and June the number of cases was 66,000, and in August the number was still 60,000. The number of Sub-Commissioners remained at 48 until the beginning of September, when it was raised to 51, and there it remained during four months. Nevertheless, the number of cases awaiting hearing kept up to 60,000 or more right up to the month of December, when the Government increased the number of Sub-Commissioners to 85. Even under that new régime, the number of cases awaiting hearing remained above 60,000 until the end of February, 1883. For 1887-8 the following are the figures which are comparable with those that I have just quoted to the House. In August, 1887, there were 13,000 cases awaiting hearing, and the number of Sub-Commissioners was 20. The cases rose to 30,000 in September, and we immediately appointed 10 additional Sub-Commissioners, making a total of 30.

In October and November, the cases rose to 62,000, and in the beginning of December we appointed 20 more Sub-Commissioners, making a total of 50, which was practically the same number as existed in 1882, when the number of cases was about the same. Therefore, the House will see that we have shown ourselves sensible of the gravity of the situation, and that we have endeavoured to meet it. At the same time we feel that there are great difficulties in simply trying to meet the accumulation of arrears merely by piling Commission on Commission and multiplying the number of Sub-Commissioners. That course involves several difficulties. It involves, among other things, the difficulties of constituting a new Court. It is an expensive process, not very convenient, and not very fast. It is costly to the Treasury, and not satisfactory politically. It is not at all easy, moreover, to find an efficient Legal Commissioner. As the House is aware, there is attached to every Sub-Commission one Legal Member who, as a rule, only sits with his Colleagues in Court, and does not attend them in their investigations into the actual circumstances of farms. He is paid a large salary by the Treasury, and he is very frequently a lawyer of not very considerable standing at the Irish Bar. You cannot get lawyers of first-class or high rank to take, even at a salary of £1,000 a-year, a Sub-Commissionership, which, from the necessity of the case, is probably a temporary employment, and which will deprive him of his connection with his *clientèle*, if such connection he is fortunate enough to have. But the House will recollect that the Sub-Commissions are not the only machinery by which cases are to be heard in the first instance. Litigants may also carry their cases before the County Court Judge, and it appears to the Government that much good would be done if we could strengthen the powers of the County Court Judge for hearing these cases. The County Court Judge is invariably a lawyer of high standing. He holds his appointment permanently, and therefore all those Gentlemen who are anxious to see judicial cases tried by Judges who hold their appointments not at the pleasure of the Executive, as the County Court Judges do, will be

Mr. A. J. Balfour

glad to see the work thrown upon them rather than upon any different tribunal, as when these cases come before a County Court Judge, who is usually a competent lawyer, it is extremely improbable that there will be an appeal to the higher Court on points of law. The reason why the County Court fails at this moment as a Court of First Instance is because the County Court Judge has to work, not with two Sub-Commissioners as an ordinary Sub-Commission Court has to work, but with one valuer. It appears to us that if we can make the Court of the County Court Judge as strong in dealing with questions of fact as the existing Sub-Commissioners' Courts are, and could utilize his very superior capacity of dealing with questions of law, we should constitute a very much better tribunal than any which now exists. In the Bill, therefore, which I am introducing to-night we propose, among other things, to strengthen the Court of the County Court Judge by substituting for the single valuer paid by the day, with whom he has to work, two gentlemen of the status of Sub-Commissioners. They will be obliged, as Sub-Commissioners are now, to go upon the farms they have to investigate in couples, and will give their advice to the County Court Judge, after their examination of the farm, carried on with the same care and the same efficiency as we may hope the investigations by the lay Sub-Commissioners are as a rule carried on at the present moment. So far, therefore, what we propose to do is merely to strengthen and make more efficient the Court of the County Court Judge. But there is another evil attendant upon the present system which we desire to remedy. At present there are two Courts dealing with these cases in competition—the Sub-Commissioners' Court and the County Court. They are, of course, dealing with exactly the same cases, competitively so to speak. We propose, therefore, that a distribution of business shall be made between the Sub-Commissioners' Courts and the County Court Judges Courts, which shall take place at any rate as long as the arrears exist as they at present stand, and the County Court Judges shall be assisted by the Land Commissioners. That, I think, is the most controversial part of

the Bill. I believe that by the Rules of the House I am not allowed to explain the remaining part of the Bill which deals with the Head Commission; but I may say briefly that while we propose to continue in office the Head Commissioners for another seven years, we propose also to introduce certain provisions which will make that Court more flexible, and, as we think, more competent to deal with the business with which it has to deal.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto."—*(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)*

MR. PARNELL (Cork) said, so far as he had been able to gather the right hon. Gentleman (the Chief Secretary for Ireland) proposed to meet the difficulty in reference to the block of cases in the Land Court by appointing assessors to the County Court Judges to perform the same duties that lay Sub-Commissioners at present performed on the Sub-Commissions, and that he also proposed as it were to drive the litigants, or the persons applying for fair rents being fixed, into the County Courts whether they wished to go there or not. Under the Act of 1881 persons applying to have fair rents fixed could at their option apply to the County Court or to the Land Commission, and while the vast majority of applications up to the present time had been made on one side, the tenants, the vast majority of such applications had been made not to the County Court Judges but to the Court of Land Commissioners whence they had been remitted to the Sub-Commissions. It was evident, therefore, and might be taken as granted, that in the opinion of the tenants who constituted the vast majority of persons applying, the County Court Judges were not a favourable or a fair tribunal. Therefore it appeared to him at first sight that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was disadvantageous from the point of view of the tenant.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS COMMISSION BILL.—[BILL 191.]

(Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Stuart Wortley.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he hoped the House would agree to take the second reading of this Bill, which contained no controversial matter, but merely embodied the Resolution of the House and empowered the Commission to inquire into the working of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—*(Mr. Secretary Matthews.)*

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) said, he hoped there would be no objection. He would like to ask whether the powers of the Commission went as far as possible with regard to obtaining evidence, also he doubted if the inquiry would have a successful issue. It was different to that of last year; for then there were ascertained facts not available here. Could the right hon. Gentleman say when the Commission was likely to begin its work? He saw that the utmost penalty for refusing to give evidence was three months imprisonment, but he doubted if that would be sufficient in certain cases that might be brought before the Commission. Would the Commission settle its own mode of procedure? Would any provisions be made for the collection of evidence and the necessary expenses incurred or for counsel for those who took a position adverse to the Board?

MR. MATTHEWS said, there was no clause in the Bill providing for the payment of witnesses. The Commission was framed on the precedents of the Belfast Commission, the Truck Commission, and the Commission on the Sheffield outrages. The Commission would settle its own form of procedure. He had had a correspondence with the Chairman, who said the Commission would be prepared to begin work at once.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878)

AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) hoped the House would agree to read the Bill a second time. It was in effect to appoint a common holiday for Glasgow. He believed that one or two hon. Members wished to make some alterations in the Bill in regard to the rest of Scotland, and he would be glad to consider those alterations in Committee.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir George Trevelyan*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 10th April.

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (FARNBOROUGH) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Farnborough Common, Broadstreet Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 192.]

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (CHISLEHURST AND ST. PAUL'S CRAY) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray Commons, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 193.]

METROPOLIS (WHITECHAPEL AND LIMEHOUSE) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for modifying the Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) Improvement Scheme, 1876, *ordered*

Mr. Matthews

to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.
Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 194.]

PILOTAGE.

Ordered, That the Committee on Pilotage do consist of Nineteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Acland, Mr. H. T. Anstruther, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Craig, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Gourley, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. King, Mr. Llewellyn, Admiral Mayne, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir William Pearce, Sir John Puleston, Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Bazley White, and Mr. Charles Wilson:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Select Committee to join with a Committee of the Lords, on Private Bill Legislation, *nominated* of,—Mr. Raikes, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATE.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Revenue Departments Estimate do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Hankey, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Raikes, and Mr. Stansfeld:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

ESTIMATES PROCEDURE (GRANTS OF SUPPLY.)

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply) do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, Viscount Curzon, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Goschen, Lord Hartington, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. John Dillon, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Salt, and Mr. Whitbread:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN BILL.

Resolution [March 23] *reported*, and *agreed to*.

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 195.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 27th March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—First Reading—
 Army (Annual) * (55); East India (Purchase
 and Construction of Railways) * (56); West-
 minster Abbey * (57).

Royal Assent— Consolidated Fund (No. 1)
 [51 Vict. c. 1]; National Debt (Conversion)
 [51 Vict. c. 2]; Statute Law Revision
 [51 Vict. c. 3].

Their Lordships met;—and having
 gone through the Business on the Paper
 without debate,

House adjourned at a quarter past Two
 o'clock, till Friday, the 13th of
 April next, a quarter past
 Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 27th March, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Commons,
appointed and nominated; House of Commons
 (Admission of Strangers), *nominated*.

WAYS AND MEANS—considered in Committee—
Resolution [March 26] *reported*.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered— Customs and Inland
 Revenue.*

Ordered—First Reading— Vacant Grounds
 (Nuisances Prevention)* [197]; Victoria
 University* [198]; Land Law (Ireland)
 (Land Commission)* [199].

Second Reading— Customs (Isle of Man)* [195].

Committee—Report—Third Reading— Metropoli-
 tan Board of Works Commission* [191],
and passed.

QUESTIONS.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE—
THE CLEANSING COMMITTEE.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked
 the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-
 tenant of Ireland, Whether it is the
 duty of the Dublin Metropolitan Police
 to report to the Chief Commissioner all
 cases where they find the footways (over
 which the Dublin Corporation have no
 control as to cleansing) are not regu-
 larly cleansed daily by the occupiers or
 owners in the City and Metropolitan

District; whether it is their duty, on
 finding that such cleansing is not done,
 to summon the owners or occupiers;
 whether he is aware of the Resolutions
 of the Cleansing Committee on the 7th
 January, 1885, 3rd March, 1886, 25th
 January and 23rd February, 1888,
 calling the attention of the Commis-
 sioners of Police to the condition of the
 footways in Dublin, especially those in
 front of public buildings; and that,
 notwithstanding these complaints, no
 action has been taken by the police in
 the matter; and, whether, in the face
 of these repeated complaints of the
 Cleansing Committee to the Commis-
 sioners of Police, he will take steps to
 secure that the bye-laws of the Public
 Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, sections
 1 and 2, shall in future be enforced by
 the Commissioners of Police?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER
 SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN)
 (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied)
 said, the Chief Commissioner of the
 Dublin Metropolitan Police reported
 that up to the present the duty of en-
 forcing the law dealing with the clean-
 sing of footpaths by the occupiers of
 premises had been undertaken by the
 Dublin Metropolitan Police. During
 the half-year ending with the present
 month 824 persons were summoned for
 neglect in this matter, while about three
 times that number were cautioned.
 However, the Commissioner added,
 taking everything into consideration,
 the citizens of Dublin fulfilled their
 obligations in this regard reasonably
 well. Probably the best remedy would
 be for the Corporation of Dublin them-
 selves to undertake the cleansing of the
 footways; as was done by the Corpora-
 tions of Rathmines, Pembroke, and
 Blackrock with satisfactory results.

MR. P. M'DONALD: Can the right
 hon. and gallant Gentleman say whe-
 ther the Corporations of cities and towns
 in England and Scotland undertake the
 cleansing of footpaths?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I do
 not know.

MR. P. M'DONALD: I can inform
 him they do not.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—SHETLAND
MAIL SERVICE.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland)
 asked the Postmaster General, Whether
 he can state what improvements he pro-

poses to make in the Shetland Mail Service, in respect of more frequent and direct communication between Lerwick and Aberdeen, as was requested in a Memorial recently addressed to him by inhabitants of Shetland?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am giving careful consideration to the Memorials for an improvement of the Postal Service between Aberdeen and Lerwick, and I am in communication with the Treasury upon the subject. I am not in a position to say more at the present time.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — "CHEERING FOR MR. BLUNT AND LADY ANNE BLUNT IN COURT, AT ATHENRY."

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is correct, as reported in the public prints, that, at a Crimes Court, held at Athenry on the 20th instant, District Inspector Hamilton stated in his evidence that he

"Considered cheering for Mr. Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt worse than using sticks and stones;"

and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that District Inspector Hamilton, in replying to a question at the trial, stated that he did not consider a crowd using sticks and stones worse than cheering for Mr. and Lady Anne Blunt; but he immediately corrected this statement by saying what he intended to convey was—

"That the conduct of a crowd with sticks and stones was, in his opinion, not worse than the conduct of the crowd at the Railway Station."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, Is there any way in which the Government can manage to convey to these magistrates a hint, that if they would confine themselves to the proper discharge of their duties, and not make speeches, the interest of justice would be better served?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I think the hon. Gentleman has not asked the Question. It refers to a

Mr. Lyell

spectator, and not to a magistrate; and the evidence was given by the Inspector in a Court of Law.

EGYPT (FINANCE)—STAMP DUTIES ON FOREIGNERS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can inform the House when the European Powers are likely to accede to the desire of the Egyptian Government to impose the Stamp Duties already borne by Natives, on foreigners residing in Egypt, in accordance with the Convention of 1885; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing from what taxation foreigners in Egypt are exempt, but to which the Natives are subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The proposal now before the Powers is that the laws for the imposition of the Stamp Duties and Licence Tax on foreigners should be settled between the Egyptian Government and the Commissioners of the Public Debt. Projects of such laws have already been carefully prepared, and have been approved by Her Majesty's Government, who are using their best efforts to procure the assent of the other Powers to their promulgation. We have not the means of giving the Return asked for; but Sir Evelyn Baring has recently stated, in a despatch on other matters, that when once these taxes are made general, the position of Europeans will, so far as taxation is concerned, be assimilated in all important respects to that of the Natives.

POST OFFICE — CARRIAGE ON RAILWAY BORNE PARCELS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) (for Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state the amount collected on railway borne parcels each year since the establishment of the Parcel Post, and the amount paid to Railway Companies in respect of the carriage of such parcels?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. F. CAMBRIDGE University) in reply, it could be given if the

merous to be given in answer to a Question.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—SAFETY FROM FIRE.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the extreme inconvenience and loss which lately resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; whether it is true that nearly 70 per cent of all the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through St. Martin's-le-Grand, the apparatus being all under one roof, and that the two top floors are above the high pressure of the water mains; whether it is true that not long since the whole building was jeopardized by a fire which raged in Paternoster Row; whether consideration has been given to the great risk run by present arrangements; and, whether it is intended to duplicate the Department on the land lately acquired in Aldersgate Street?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. **RAIKES**) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that I have no official information of the inconvenience and loss which have resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; but I understand that the breakdown was caused by a snowstorm, which damaged the wires. About 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through the Central Telegraph Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. Only on the top floor of that building are the firehydrants not supplied from the street mains; they are supplied from tanks on the roof containing 28,000 gallons of water, pumped up from the artesian well on the premises. It is not true that the building was in any danger from a fire in Paternoster Row. The present arrangements have been made after mature consideration, and there is no intention to establish a duplicate Central Telegraph Office. The building, I may add, is fireproof throughout.

ARMY—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS—THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is in force a General

Order that the Queen's Regulations shall be strictly observed on all occasions by every corps; and, whether the Honourable Artillery Company is not expressly named in those Regulations among the regiments and corps of Her Majesty's Service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. **E. STANHOPE**) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Queen's Regulations are only applicable to such a corps as the Honourable Artillery Corps when subject to military law under the Army Act. The only reference to the Honourable Artillery Company in the Queen's Regulations is in Section I, paragraph 3a, which lays down that, in consideration of its antiquity, the Honourable Artillery Company will take precedence next after the Regular Forces.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PAYMENT OF RESULT FEES.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What time after the date of examination for result fees in Irish National Schools are such fees paid to the successful candidates; and, whether the same ought not to be paid within one month after the examination?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel **KING-HARMAN**) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The Question has been put down at such a short Notice that I am sorry I cannot answer it.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—PROMOTION TO THE LOWER DIVISION.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the cases of meritorious Civil Service writers, who were recommended for promotion to the Lower Division by the responsible Heads of their Departments, examined each case individually; whether a Report was made thereon; and, if so, will be laid, for the information of Members of this House, upon the Table; whether the Treasury intend to take any further steps respecting the recommendations of those writers who were not included in the first list of promotions; and, will they soon notify their decision?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. **JACKSON**) (Leeds, N.): The work done by copyists

recommended for promotion was inquired into, and each case was considered by the Committee, which reported to the Treasury. The Treasury will report the result to the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments; but I do not propose to present Papers to the House.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the question that a pilotage certificate only shall be granted to a British subject, as proposed to be enacted by "The Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill," will be considered by the Committee which was appointed on Monday last to inquire into the subject of pilotage; and, if not, whether instructions will be given to the Committee to do so; and, what course the Government propose to adopt with regard to those certificates at present held by foreign masters or mates, authorizing them to pilot their own ships, under the provisions of "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854?"

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, he certainly understood that this subject was included in the reference to the Pilotage Committee. In regard to the second part of the Question, existing certificates would, of course, hold good, pending the inquiry.

THE NEW HEBRIDES—WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH TROOPS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French troops have now quitted the New Hebrides, pursuant to the arrangement made by Her Majesty with the Government of the French Republic?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Yes, Sir; the French detachments were withdrawn on the 15th instant, which was within the period of the engagement.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ASSAULTS BY CONSTABLES)—PATRICK SWEENEY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for

Mr. Jackson

the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Sweeney, who was charged on Thursday last, at the Thames Police Court, with assaulting Constable Dales, 441 H, whilst in the execution of his duty; whether Sweeney appeared in the dock with his "face severely cut, covered with blood, and very much swollen;" whether the constable admitted that he struck Sweeney; whether he is aware that the learned magistrate discharged the prisoner, and said that "the officer used more force than was necessary;" and, whether he will draw the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the case, with a view to the complaint against Constable Dales being investigated in open Court?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that the constable found Sweeney kicking a woman, who was lying on the pavement. The constable interfered, and was thereupon attacked by Sweeney and two women, dragged to the ground, struck and kicked. The constable stated that in the course of this struggle he struck Sweeney. Sweeney appeared in the dock with a swollen lip and with blood on his face, which had apparently come from his nose. The magistrate discharged the prisoner, making the observation quoted in the Question. The matter is now being investigated by the Chief Constable of the district. I have no reason at present for considering it a case for the Public Prosecutor. Sweeney stated that he was going to apply for a summons. This will be the proper course to secure an investigation in open Court.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the revenues paid to King Theebaw from the Burmah Ruby Mines averaged for some years 1,50,000 rupees annually, and in the last year amounted to about 1,90,000 rupees, in addition to the fact that all rubies of the value of 2,000 rupees and upwards became the property of the King; whether, up to December last, the Indian Government received from these mines only the proceeds of current

Exchequer, owing to the fact that these mines are practically inexhaustible for a great number of years; whether sufficient precautions are taken to prevent smuggling; and whether it is the fact that large numbers of rubies are known to be disposed of to merchants and others without any royalty having been paid upon them; and, whether the difference to the Indian Revenue between the royalties actually received and the terms offered by Messrs. Streeter has been a loss of about 30,000 rupees per month, or 3,60,000 rupees a-year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1) According to the best information possessed by the Secretary of State, King Theebaw's revenue from the Ruby Mines did not average so much as £150,000; and he never received so much as £190,000. Stones of the value of 2,000 rupees were Royal perquisites; but were generally secreted, or broken up by the finders. (2) So far as reports have reached the Secretary of State.—Yes. (3) Cannot be answered till the Report of the scientific expert sent out by the Secretary of State has been received. (4) All precautions which are practicable are taken; but some smuggling undoubtedly takes place. (5) The diminution of revenue referred to does take place while the mines are unworked; but as the rubies are still there it is expected to be recouped in years to come.

MR. HANBURY asked, when the scientific expert would report?

SIR JOHN GORST replied that he believed he was at the mines now, and his Report might be expected very soon; but he could not fix a date.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—TENANTS OF MR. W. L. JOYNT.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the leasehold tenants on the County Limerick estate of Mr. William Lane Joynt, Crown and Treasury Solicitor, have served notices for the fixing of fair rents, and, pending the hearing of their cases, have offered to pay three-fourths of the rent due on the 29th of September, last, but are being served with writs for the full amount; and, as there is possibility of the cases of these tenants being decided for some months,

will he use his influence with this official of the Irish Government to induce him to stay proceedings until the tenants obtain relief from the Land Court?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I am informed that three writs were served on the 2nd instant on leasehold tenants of Mr. Lane Joynt for the half-year's rent due in September last. These tenants were among eight leasehold tenants on the estate who have applied to have fair rents fixed. They have since settled.

CRIMINAL LAW—HEALTH OF JOHN FROST IN GAOL—ALLEGED NEGLECT.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of John Frost, late of 8, Emmett Street, Poplar, who was convicted on the 24th of November last, for receiving stolen goods, and who died in the hospital of the gaol on the 27th of December; whether he is aware that a strong feeling exists that Mr. Frost, who was suffering from serious illness when convicted, did not receive proper treatment when in gaol, and that his death was thereby caused; and, whether he will institute a searching inquiry into all the facts of the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen a report of the inquest held on the body of this man. The allegation referred to by the hon. Member was before the jury, and was carefully considered by them. Their verdict was that the man received proper medical care and attention while in the prison. I have desired the Prison Commissioners to inquire whether there is any reason to doubt that the jury formed a correct opinion. Forfeiture of money now no longer exists, and, therefore, the £15 that Frost had in his possession will be handed over to his family.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE—THE GOVERNORSHIP.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) (for Mr. MUNRO-FERGUSON) (Leith, &c.) asked the Under Secretary

of State for the Colonies, Whether, on the next appointment to the Governorship of the Cape of Good Hope, it is proposed to combine that office, as at present, with the High Commissioner-ship of South Africa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that this Question has received careful consideration, and that Her Majesty's Government, as at present advised, do not propose to make any alteration in the existing arrangements. I may add that the relations between the Cape Ministers and the High Commissioner are on a very satisfactory footing; and it would be undesirable to check that cordial co-operation, which has been of benefit to British and Native interests throughout South Africa.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Why the Returns of Judicial Rents for November and December, 1887, having been laid upon the Table on the 22nd of February, have not yet been distributed, and with whom the responsibility for the delay rests?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper that morning; but he had ascertained that the Returns were duly presented and laid on the Table at the proper time. Some delay must necessarily occur before these Returns were printed.

MR. J. E. ELLIS asked if, on previous occasions, these Returns had not always been printed within 10 days after being laid on the Table?

MR. MADDEN said, he was unable to answer the Question without Notice.

POST OFFICE—EMBOSSSED STAMPED ENVELOPES FOR INDIA AND AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state why there are not embossed stamped envelopes for 5d. and 6d. respectively for India and Australia for sale here as there are 1d. embossed

envelopes; and, is he aware that in India the 5d. embossed envelope is procurable, and has been for the past 25 years?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It has been thought that the general demand for such envelopes is not sufficient to justify the expense of supplying them. If they were introduced it would be impossible to limit their supply to certain towns; and there are valid objections to increasing unnecessarily the various denominations of stamps, and thereby the pecuniary responsibility of Postmasters. But if a request for such envelopes were made by a responsible body representing the Chinese and Australian trade I should be willing to consider it.

POST OFFICE—MALTA AND GIBRALTAR—SMALL REMITTANCES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is it true that the cost of sending small sums of money to Malta and Gibraltar, to which emigrants do not go, ranges from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for 1s. 6d. to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for 20s.; yet these sums cannot be sent through the post to Canada, or any other place where the emigrants do go, for less than 6d.; and, has he under his consideration any alteration of this system?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The case is as stated by the hon. Member, and the explanation is simple. To Malta and Gibraltar postal orders are available on the same terms as within the United Kingdom itself. Indeed, until recently the Post Offices in those two Dependencies were under the direct control of the Imperial Post Office, and practically enjoyed all the advantages of the Imperial Postal System. Canada, on the other hand, although invited to participate in the postal order system to the same extent as it has been adopted in India and some of the Colonies, has not hitherto shown any disposition to do so. Consequently, the money order system alone is open to the public for the remittance of small sums of money, for which the lowest charge is 6d. for any sum not exceeding £2. I shall be happy to communicate again with the Canadian Post Office on the subject.

Mr. H. Gardner

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT — EXAMINATION FOR OUTDOOR OFFICERS.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as no notice of the suspension of the examination for outdoor officers in the Customs Department was given, he can now state the probable date of the next examination; and, whether the age of candidates now within the limits will be extended, in order that it may be competent for them to come up for examination, as in the case of the candidates for engineer studentships?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I can give no date when the next examination of this class is likely to be held, as there are now more outdoor officers in the Service than will hereafter be required, besides which there are some candidates already qualified for the post. It is not intended to extend the limits of age qualifying for the examination.

IRISH LAND COMMISSIONERS — SITTINGS IN FERMANAGH.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that there has been no sitting of the Land Commissioners in Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh, since April, 1887, and that a large number of originating notices have been recently served in the District; and, when it is proposed that the Sub-Commissioners will sit in Lisnaskea?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, as the Question appeared without sufficient Notice I have been unable to get the information necessary to answer it.

MR. H. CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall repeat the Question after the Recess.

IRELAND — RAILWAY COMMUNICATION — DONEGAL.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) (for MR. MAC NEILL) (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take

any, and, if so, what, steps to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, in reference to railway communication in the County of Donegal with the towns of Donegal and Killybegs?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government intend to deal with the consideration of the Report of the Royal Commission in detail. The first portion of the Report relates to the important subject of arterial drainage, in connection with which a Bill is now in an advanced stage of preparation. They are not at present in a position to state when they will be able to consider the recommendation in the particular case alluded to in the Question, which belongs to a later period of their Report.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — SALE OF A BOYCOTTED FARM.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following account of a case mentioned in the last Report of the Irish Land Commissioners as having occurred in the County of Louth:—

"A purchaser and mortgagor who owed 12 half-yearly instalments was evicted from his farm after all attempts at compromise had failed. The farm was then set up for sale by us, and we were obliged to buy it in as the sale was Boycotted;"

whether this farm still remains in the hands of the Commissioners; if not, when it was sold, and how much of the price was absorbed in costs, expenses, and payment of caretakers; and, in how many instances the Commissioners have been able to effect sales of a purchaser's interest against his will since their Report?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that directions were given in October last to the Solicitor of the Commission to proceed and attempt to sell the farm in question. Some private negotiations took place, but did not lead to any result. The lands have been advertised for sale by auction, and will be set up for sale in Drogheda on the

31st instant. With regard to the last paragraph, the Commissioners have given me no information, and I cannot answer it at present.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Am I to understand, then, that the farm in question is still in the hands of the Land Commissioners?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Yes, Sir. The sale is announced to take place on the 31st.

POST OFFICE (CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE)—SICK PAY.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office, when absent from duty owing to illness for more than one day, are required to furnish a medical certificate; whether the chief medical officer and his assistants often grant leave of absence for this cause; and, whether, in all cases of illness proved to the satisfaction of the chief medical officer, he will grant full pay, as is given to other Civil servants of equal status?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is the case, as implied in the Question of the hon. Member, that the telegraphists at the Central Station, when absent ill for more than one day, have to furnish a medical certificate, and that such certificate is not unfrequently given by the medical officer. But it is not the case that in the matter of pay during illness the telegraphists are subject to different Regulations from other Post Office servants of corresponding rank.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT—ASSENT OF TRUSTEES.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the case of the death of one or more of the Trustees, the Bank of England insists that the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee must accompany assent to the Conversion Scheme; if so, whether, with a view to facilitate conversion, he will consider the advisability of allowing the assent of surviving Trustees to be accepted, leaving proof of the deceased Trustee to remain for future action?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I have made inquiries at the Bank of England, and I

Colonel King-Harman

was given to understand that the authorities will not insist upon the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee accompanying the consent to the Conversion Scheme. On the contrary, it has been agreed to facilitate arrangements by allowing the surviving Trustees to assent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is able now to state in what manner the Local Government Board propose to deal with the electoral representation at the new London County Council of the present area of the City of London; and, whether they propose to avail themselves of the exception made in section 52, sub-section 5 (b), to the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, and give to the City area a larger proportion of representation than its population justifies; and, if so, in what manner, and to what extent?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think I must ask the hon. Gentleman to allow me to reserve any statement as to the representation of particular areas until we come to the clauses of the Bill dealing with that matter.

COAL AND WINE DUES—RENEWAL.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will communicate to the House what course Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue with regard to the renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have not felt themselves at liberty to depart from the position they have taken up on this question. They are unable to give their support to the Bill suggested by the existing authority, and will leave it to the House at large to determine whether or not it is expedient that the Coal and Wine Dues should be renewed.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked, whether the Government would be prepared to give any facilities for discussing the question of the Coal and Wine Dues, which is a subject of the ratepayers of

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have had no Notice of the Question, and my answer must be of the same character as that which I have just given. I cannot undertake to give facilities for a measure of this kind, for which the Government are not responsible.

MARKET RIGHTS AND TOLLS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, Whether any steps had been taken to fill the vacancy on the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls caused by the resignation of the hon. Member for Londonderry?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he hoped that the vacancy might be filled up in a few days.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he wished to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which he had given him private Notice. It was in reference to the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) Bill. The second reading of that Bill had been objected to from the other side of the House. He had communicated to the right hon. Gentleman the desire of Scotch Members that a second reading should be given to the measure; and he begged to ask him whether he would be assisted in any way by the Government in getting the Bill put down at some future time in order that it might in the meantime be withdrawn?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman had been good enough to send me a letter on the subject signed by several Scotch Members, to whose wishes I should be glad, if it were possible, to give effect. But the hon. Gentleman must be aware that there are many other hon. Gentlemen in the position he occupies—who have Bills in which they take great interest, and which are also interesting to other Members with whom they are associated. I greatly fear that if the Government were to make an exception in favour of one Bill, I should be pressed to make

exceptions for other Bills, for which it would be utterly impossible for me to afford facilities. Under all the circumstances, I am sure that at this very early period of the Session the hon. Member will have abundant opportunities of bringing forward his measure; and, in any case, should he not succeed in bringing it on, the object he has in view is covered entirely by a Bill of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (MR. Childers) has charge.

INLAND REVENUE (IRELAND)—CUSTOMS FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) said, he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question of which he had given him private Notice—What was the nature and extent of certain frauds which had occurred in a Customs bonded warehouse recently in Belfast; what number of casks of bonded spirits was removed without payment of duty; how many casks were found in the warehouse of which no account had been taken in the Departmental books; what number of casks were found to contain water only; and, whether the Government intended to take steps to prevent these occurrences in Belfast bonded warehouses in future?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: On recently taking stock at one of the Customs bonded warehouses in Belfast it was found that certain casks of spirits containing together upwards of 2,000 gallons proof, and a cask of wine containing 58 liquid gallons, had been delivered without payment of duty by means of fraudulent alterations in the delivery orders. These frauds were the work of a defaulting servant of the proprietors of the warehouse; and the duty on the wine and spirits thus improperly removed from the bonded warehouse had since been recovered. Seven casks of spirits, of which no account existed in the official books, as well as five casks of water, were also found in the warehouse. There is, besides, some evidence of malpractices in regard to eight other casks, as to which further inquiries are being prosecuted. The Board of Customs are taking steps with the view of preventing the recurrence of these practices.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for To-morrow*, at Two of the clock.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT (1878)
AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 154.]

(*Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Baird.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton) hoped the House would agree to read the Bill a second time. It was in effect to appoint a common holiday for Glasgow. He believed that one or two hon. Members wished to make some alterations in the Bill in regard to the rest of Scotland, and he would be glad to consider those alterations in Committee.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir George Trevelyan*,)—put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed for Tuesday 10th April*.

M O T I O N S .

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (FARNBOROUGH)
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Farnborough Common, Broadstreet Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street (Green, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.*

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 192.]

METROPOLITAN COMMONS (CHISLEHURST
AND ST. PAUL'S CRAY) PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Scheme under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Chislehurst and St. Paul's Cray Commons, *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.*

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 193.]

METROPOLIS (WHITECHAPEL AND LIME-
HOUSE) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State for modifying the Metropolis (Whitechapel and Limehouse) Improvement Scheme, 1876, *ordered*

Mr. Matthews

to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.
Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 194.]

PILOTAGE.

Ordered, That the Committee on Pilotage do consist of Nineteen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Acland, Mr. H. T. Anstruther, Mr. Cossham, Mr. Craig, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Gourley, Lord Claud Hamilton, Mr. King, Mr. Llewellyn, Admiral Mayne, Mr. Joseph Nolan, Sir William Pearce, Sir John Puleston, Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Bazley White, and Mr. Charles Wilson:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

Select Committee to join with a Committee of the Lords, on Private Bill Legislation, *nominated* of,—Mr. Raikes, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATE.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Revenue Departments Estimate do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Arthur Acland, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Hankey, Mr. Henniker Heaton, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Raikes, and Mr. Stansfeld:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

ESTIMATES PROCEDURE (GRANTS OF
SUPPLY.)

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Estimates Procedure (Grants of Supply) do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Randolph Churchill, Viscount Curzon, Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Goschen, Lord Hartington, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. John Dillon, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Salt, and Mr. Whitbread:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

CUSTOMS, ISLE OF MAN BILL.

Resolution [March 23] *reported, and agreed to*.

Bill *ordered to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 195.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 27th March, 1888.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—First Reading—
 Army (Annual) * (55); East India (Purchase
 and Construction of Railways) * (56); West-
 minster Abbey * (57).
Royal Assent— Consolidated Fund (No. 1)
 [51 Vict. c. 1]; National Debt (Conversion)
 [51 Vict. c. 2]; Statute Law Revision
 [51 Vict. c. 3].

Their Lordships met;—and having
 gone through the Business on the Paper
 without debate,

House adjourned at a quarter past Two
 o'clock, till Friday, the 13th of
 April next, a quarter past
 Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 27th March, 1888.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Commons,
appointed and nominated; House of Commons
 (Admission of Strangers), *nominated*.

WAYS AND MEANS—considered in Committee—
Resolution [March 26] *reported*.

PUBLIC BILLS—Ordered— Customs and Inland
 Revenue.*

Ordered—First Reading— Vacant Grounds
 (Nuisances Prevention) * [197]; Victoria
 University * [198]; Land Law (Ireland)
 (Land Commission) * [199].

Second Reading— Customs (Isle of Man) * [195].
Committee—Report—Third Reading— Metropoli-
 tan Board of Works Commission * [191],
and passed.

QUESTIONS.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE—
THE CLEANSING COMMITTEE.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked
 the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-
 tenant of Ireland, Whether it is the
 duty of the Dublin Metropolitan Police
 to report to the Chief Commissioner all
 cases where they find the footways (over
 which the Dublin Corporation have no
 control as to cleansing) are not regu-
 larly cleansed daily by the occupiers or
 owners in the City and Metropolitan

District; whether it is their duty, on
 finding that such cleansing is not done,
 to summon the owners or occupiers;
 whether he is aware of the Resolutions
 of the Cleansing Committee on the 7th
 January, 1885, 3rd March, 1886, 25th
 January and 23rd February, 1888,
 calling the attention of the Commis-
 sioners of Police to the condition of the
 footways in Dublin, especially those in
 front of public buildings; and that,
 notwithstanding these complaints, no
 action has been taken by the police in
 the matter; and, whether, in the face
 of these repeated complaints of the
 Cleansing Committee to the Commis-
 sioners of Police, he will take steps to
 secure that the bye-laws of the Public
 Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, sections
 1 and 2, shall in future be enforced by
 the Commissioners of Police?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER
 SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN)
 (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied)
 said, the Chief Commissioner of the
 Dublin Metropolitan Police reported
 that up to the present the duty of en-
 forcing the law dealing with the clean-
 sing of footpaths by the occupiers of
 premises had been undertaken by the
 Dublin Metropolitan Police. During
 the half-year ending with the present
 month 824 persons were summoned for
 neglect in this matter, while about three
 times that number were cautioned.
 However, the Commissioner added,
 taking everything into consideration,
 the citizens of Dublin fulfilled their
 obligations in this regard reasonably
 well. Probably the best remedy would
 be for the Corporation of Dublin them-
 selves to undertake the cleansing of the
 footways; as was done by the Corpora-
 tions of Rathmines, Pembroke, and
 Blackrock with satisfactory results.

MR. P. M'DONALD: Can the right
 hon. and gallant Gentleman say whe-
 ther the Corporations of cities and towns
 in England and Scotland undertake the
 cleansing of footpaths?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I do
 not know.

MR. P. M'DONALD: I can inform
 him they do not.

POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—SHETLAND
MAIL SERVICE.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland)
 asked the Postmaster General, Whether
 he can state what improvements he pro-

poses to make in the Shetland Mail Service, in respect of more frequent and direct communication between Lerwick and Aberdeen, as was requested in a Memorial recently addressed to him by inhabitants of Shetland?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am giving careful consideration to the Memorials for an improvement of the Postal Service between Aberdeen and Lerwick, and I am in communication with the Treasury upon the subject. I am not in a position to say more at the present time.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — "CHEERING FOR MR. BLUNT AND LADY ANNE BLUNT IN COURT, AT ATHENRY."

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is correct, as reported in the public prints, that, at a Crimes Court, held at Athenry on the 20th instant, District Inspector Hamilton stated in his evidence that he

"Considered cheering for Mr. Blunt and Lady Anne Blunt worse than using sticks and stones;"

and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Inspector General of Constabulary reports that District Inspector Hamilton, in replying to a question at the trial, stated that he did not consider a crowd using sticks and stones worse than cheering for Mr. and Lady Anne Blunt; but he immediately corrected this statement by saying what he intended to convey was—

"That the conduct of a crowd with sticks and stones was, in his opinion, not worse than the conduct of the crowd at the Railway Station."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyronne, S.): May I ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, Is there any way in which the Government can manage to convey to these magistrates a hint, that if they would confine themselves to the proper discharge of their duties, and not make speeches, the interest of justice would be better served?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I think the hon. Gentleman has not read the Question. It refers to a District In-

spector, and not to a magistrate; and the evidence was given by the Inspector in a Court of Law.

EGYPT (FINANCE)—STAMP DUTIES ON FOREIGNERS.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can inform the House when the European Powers are likely to accede to the desire of the Egyptian Government to impose the Stamp Duties already borne by Natives, on foreigners residing in Egypt, in accordance with the Convention of 1885; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing from what taxation foreigners in Egypt are exempt, but to which the Natives are subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The proposal now before the Powers is that the laws for the imposition of the Stamp Duties and Licence Tax on foreigners should be settled between the Egyptian Government and the Commissioners of the Public Debt. Projects of such laws have already been carefully prepared, and have been approved by Her Majesty's Government, who are using their best efforts to procure the assent of the other Powers to their promulgation. We have not the means of giving the Return asked for; but Sir Evelyn Baring has recently stated, in a despatch on other matters, that when once these taxes are made general, the position of Europeans will, so far as taxation is concerned, be assimilated in all important respects to that of the Natives.

POST OFFICE — CARRIAGE ON RAILWAY BORNE PARCELS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) (for Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state the amount collected on railway borne parcels each year since the establishment of the Parcel Post, and the amount paid to Railway Companies in respect of the carriage of such parcels?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University) in reply, said, the amount could be given if the right hon. Gentleman would move for a Return. The figures were too nu-

Mr. Lyell

merous to be given in answer to a Question.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—SAFETY FROM FIRE.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the extreme inconvenience and loss which lately resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; whether it is true that nearly 70 per cent of all the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through St. Martin's-le-Grand, the apparatus being all under one roof, and that the two top floors are above the high pressure of the water mains; whether it is true that not long since the whole building was jeopardized by a fire which raged in Paternoster Row; whether consideration has been given to the great risk run by present arrangements; and, whether it is intended to duplicate the Department on the land lately acquired in Aldersgate Street?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that I have no official information of the inconvenience and loss which have resulted from the breakdown of telegraphic communication in New York; but I understand that the breakdown was caused by a snowstorm, which damaged the wires. About 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom pass through the Central Telegraph Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand. Only on the top floor of that building are the fire hydrants not supplied from the street mains; they are supplied from tanks on the roof containing 28,000 gallons of water, pumped up from the artesian well on the premises. It is not true that the building was in any danger from a fire in Paternoster Row. The present arrangements have been made after mature consideration, and there is no intention to establish a duplicate Central Telegraph Office. The building, I may add, is fireproof throughout.

ARMY—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS—THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is in force a General

Order that the Queen's Regulations shall be strictly observed on all occasions by every corps; and, whether the Honourable Artillery Company is not expressly named in those Regulations among the regiments and corps of Her Majesty's Service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Queen's Regulations are only applicable to such a corps as the Honourable Artillery Corps when subject to military law under the Army Act. The only reference to the Honourable Artillery Company in the Queen's Regulations is in Section I, paragraph 3a, which lays down that, in consideration of its antiquity, the Honourable Artillery Company will take precedence next after the Regular Forces.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PAYMENT OF RESULT FEES.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What time after the date of examination for result fees in Irish National Schools are such fees paid to the successful candidates; and, whether the same ought not to be paid within one month after the examination?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The Question has been put down at such a short Notice that I am sorry I cannot answer it.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—PROMOTION TO THE LOWER DIVISION.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the cases of meritorious Civil Service writers, who were recommended for promotion to the Lower Division by the responsible Heads of their Departments, examined each case individually; whether a Report was made thereon; and, if so, will be laid, for the information of Members of this House, upon the Table; whether the Treasury intend to take any further steps respecting the recommendations of those writers who were not included in the first list of promotions; and, will they soon notify their decision?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The work done by copyists

recommended for promotion was inquired into, and each case was considered by the Committee, which reported to the Treasury. The Treasury will report the result to the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments; but I do not propose to present Papers to the House.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the question that a pilotage certificate only shall be granted to a British subject, as proposed to be enacted by "The Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill," will be considered by the Committee which was appointed on Monday last to inquire into the subject of pilotage; and, if not, whether instructions will be given to the Committee to do so; and, what course the Government propose to adopt with regard to those certificates at present held by foreign masters or mates, authorizing them to pilot their own ships, under the provisions of "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854?"

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.) said, he certainly understood that this subject was included in the reference to the Pilotage Committee. In regard to the second part of the Question, existing certificates would, of course, hold good, pending the inquiry.

THE NEW HEBRIDES—WITHDRAWAL OF THE FRENCH TROOPS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French troops have now quitted the New Hebrides, pursuant to the arrangement made by Her Majesty with the Government of the French Republic?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Yes, Sir; the French detachments were withdrawn on the 15th instant, which was within the period of the engagement.

METROPOLITAN POLICE (ASSAULTS BY CONSTABLES)—PATRICK SWEENEY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for

the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Sweeney, who was charged on Thursday last, at the Thames Police Court, with assaulting Constable Dales, 441 H, whilst in the execution of his duty; whether Sweeney appeared in the dock with his "face severely cut, covered with blood, and very much swollen;" whether the constable admitted that he struck Sweeney; whether he is aware that the learned magistrate discharged the prisoner, and said that "the officer used more force than was necessary;" and, whether he will draw the attention of the Public Prosecutor to the case, with a view to the complaint against Constable Dales being investigated in open Court?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner that the constable found Sweeney kicking a woman, who was lying on the pavement. The constable interfered, and was thereupon attacked by Sweeney and two women, dragged to the ground, struck and kicked. The constable stated that in the course of this struggle he struck Sweeney. Sweeney appeared in the dock with a swollen lip and with blood on his face, which had apparently come from his nose. The magistrate discharged the prisoner, making the observation quoted in the Question. The matter is now being investigated by the Chief Constable of the district. I have no reason at present for considering it a case for the Public Prosecutor. Sweeney stated that he was going to apply for a summons. This will be the proper course to secure an investigation in open Court.

BURMAH—THE RUBY MINES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the revenues paid to King Theebaw from the Burmah Ruby Mines averaged for some years 1,50,000 rupees annually, and in the last year amounted to about 1,90,000 rupees, in addition to the fact that all rubies of the value of 2,000 rupees and upwards became the property of the King; whether, up to December last, the Indian Government had received from these mines only about 25,000 rupees during the preceding 12 months; whether a loss of current revenue is a permanent loss to the Indian

Mr. Jackson

Exchequer, owing to the fact that these mines are practically inexhaustible for a great number of years; whether sufficient precautions are taken to prevent smuggling; and whether it is the fact that large numbers of rubies are known to be disposed of to merchants and others without any royalty having been paid upon them; and, whether the difference to the Indian Revenue between the royalties actually received and the terms offered by Messrs. Streeter has been a loss of about 30,000 rupees per month, or 3,60,000 rupees a-year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): (1) According to the best information possessed by the Secretary of State, King Theebaw's revenue from the Ruby Mines did not average so much as £150,000; and he never received so much as £190,000. Stones of the value of 2,000 rupees were Royal perquisites; but were generally secreted, or broken up by the finders. (2) So far as reports have reached the Secretary of State.—Yes. (3) Cannot be answered till the Report of the scientific expert sent out by the Secretary of State has been received. (4) All precautions which are practicable are taken; but some smuggling undoubtedly takes place. (5) The diminution of revenue referred to does take place while the mines are unworked; but as the rubies are still there it is expected to be recouped in years to come.

MR. HANBURY asked, when the scientific expert would report?

SIR JOHN GORST replied that he believed he was at the mines now, and his Report might be expected very soon; but he could not fix a date.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—TENANTS OF MR. W. L. JOYNT.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the leasehold tenants on the County Limerick estate of Mr. William Lane Joynt, Crown and Treasury Solicitor, have served notices for the fixing of fair rents, and, pending the hearing of their cases, have offered to pay three-fourths of the rent due on the 29th of September, last, but are being served with writs for the full amount; and, as there is no possibility of the cases of these tenants being decided for some months,

will he use his influence with this official of the Irish Government to induce him to stay proceedings until the tenants obtain relief from the Land Court?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I am informed that three writs were served on the 2nd instant on leasehold tenants of Mr. Lane Joynt for the half-year's rent due in September last. These tenants were among eight leasehold tenants on the estate who have applied to have fair rents fixed. They have since settled.

CRIMINAL LAW—HEALTH OF JOHN FROST IN GAOL—ALLEGED NEGLECT.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of John Frost, late of 8, Emmett Street, Poplar, who was convicted on the 24th of November last, for receiving stolen goods, and who died in the hospital of the gaol on the 27th of December; whether he is aware that a strong feeling exists that Mr. Frost, who was suffering from serious illness when convicted, did not receive proper treatment when in gaol, and that his death was thereby caused; and, whether he will institute a searching inquiry into all the facts of the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (MR. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have seen a report of the inquest held on the body of this man. The allegation referred to by the hon. Member was before the jury, and was carefully considered by them. Their verdict was that the man received proper medical care and attention while in the prison. I have desired the Prison Commissioners to inquire whether there is any reason to doubt that the jury formed a correct opinion. Forfeiture of money now no longer exists, and, therefore, the £15 that Frost had in his possession will be handed over to his family.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE—THE GOVERNORSHIP.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) (for Mr. MUNRO-FERGUSON) (Leith, &c.) asked the Under Secretary

of State for the Colonies, Whether, on the next appointment to the Governorship of the Cape of Good Hope, it is proposed to combine that office, as at present, with the High Commissioner-ship of South Africa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that this Question has received careful consideration, and that Her Majesty's Government, as at present advised, do not propose to make any alteration in the existing arrangements. I may add that the relations between the Cape Ministers and the High Commissioner are on a very satisfactory footing; and it would be undesirable to check that cordial co-operation, which has been of benefit to British and Native interests throughout South Africa.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS—RETURNS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Why the Returns of Judicial Rents for November and December, 1887, having been laid upon the Table on the 22nd of February, have not yet been distributed, and with whom the responsibility for the delay rests?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the Question of the hon. Member only appeared on the Paper that morning; but he had ascertained that the Returns were duly presented and laid on the Table at the proper time. Some delay must necessarily occur before these Returns were printed.

MR. J. E. ELLIS asked if, on previous occasions, these Returns had not always been printed within 10 days after being laid on the Table?

MR. MADDEN said, he was unable to answer the Question without Notice.

POST OFFICE—EMBOSSSED STAMPED ENVELOPES FOR INDIA AND AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, If he can state why there are not embossed stamped envelopes for 5d. and 6d. respectively for India and Australia for sale here as there are 1d. embossed

envelopes; and, is he aware that in India the 5d. embossed envelope is procurable, and has been for the past 25 years?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It has been thought that the general demand for such envelopes is not sufficient to justify the expense of supplying them. If they were introduced it would be impossible to limit their supply to certain towns; and there are valid objections to increasing unnecessarily the various denominations of stamps, and thereby the pecuniary responsibility of Postmasters. But if a request for such envelopes were made by a responsible body representing the Chinese and Australian trade I should be willing to consider it.

POST OFFICE—MALTA AND GIBRALTAR—SMALL REMITTANCES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is it true that the cost of sending small sums of money to Malta and Gibraltar, to which emigrants do not go, ranges from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for 1s. 6d. to 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for 20s.; yet these sums cannot be sent through the post to Canada, or any other place where the emigrants do go, for less than 6d.; and, has he under his consideration any alteration of this system?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The case is as stated by the hon. Member, and the explanation is simple. To Malta and Gibraltar postal orders are available on the same terms as within the United Kingdom itself. Indeed, until recently the Post Offices in those two Dependencies were under the direct control of the Imperial Post Office, and practically enjoyed all the advantages of the Imperial Postal System. Canada, on the other hand, although invited to participate in the postal order system to the same extent as it has been adopted in India and some of the Colonies, has not hitherto shown any disposition to do so. Consequently, the money order system alone is open to the public for the remittance of small sums of money, for which the lowest charge is 6d. for any sum not exceeding £2. I shall be happy to communicate again with the Canadian Post Office on the subject.

Mr. H. Gardner

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT — EXAMINATION FOR OUTDOOR OFFICERS.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as no notice of the suspension of the examination for outdoor officers in the Customs Department was given, he can now state the probable date of the next examination; and, whether the age of candidates now within the limits will be extended, in order that it may be competent for them to come up for examination, as in the case of the candidates for engineer studentships?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I can give no date when the next examination of this class is likely to be held, as there are now more outdoor officers in the Service than will hereafter be required, besides which there are some candidates already qualified for the post. It is not intended to extend the limits of age qualifying for the examination.

IRISH LAND COMMISSIONERS — SITTINGS IN FERMANAGH.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that there has been no sitting of the Land Commissioners in Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh, since April, 1887, and that a large number of originating notices have been recently served in the District; and, when it is proposed that the Sub-Commissioners will sit in Lisnaskea?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sir, as the Question appeared without sufficient Notice I have been unable to get the information necessary to answer it.

MR. H. CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall repeat the Question after the Recess.

IRELAND — RAILWAY COMMUNICATION — DONEGAL.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) (for Mr. MAC NEILL) (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take

any, and, if so, what, steps to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works, in reference to railway communication in the County of Donegal with the towns of Donegal and Killybegs?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Government intend to deal with the consideration of the Report of the Royal Commission in detail. The first portion of the Report relates to the important subject of arterial drainage, in connection with which a Bill is now in an advanced stage of preparation. They are not at present in a position to state when they will be able to consider the recommendation in the particular case alluded to in the Question, which belongs to a later period of their Report.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — SALE OF A BOYCOTTED FARM.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the following account of a case mentioned in the last Report of the Irish Land Commissioners as having occurred in the County of Louth:—

"A purchaser and mortgagor who owed 12 half-yearly instalments was evicted from his farm after all attempts at compromise had failed. The farm was then set up for sale by us, and we were obliged to buy it in as the sale was Boycotted;"

whether this farm still remains in the hands of the Commissioners; if not, when it was sold, and how much of the price was absorbed in costs, expenses, and payment of caretakers; and, in how many instances the Commissioners have been able to effect sales of a purchaser's interest against his will since their Report?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that directions were given in October last to the Solicitor of the Commission to proceed and attempt to sell the farm in question. Some private negotiations took place, but did not lead to any result. The lands have been advertised for sale by auction, and will be set up for sale in Drogheda on the

31st instant. With regard to the last paragraph, the Commissioners have given me no information, and I cannot answer it at present.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Am I to understand, then, that the farm in question is still in the hands of the Land Commissioners?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Yes, Sir. The sale is announced to take place on the 31st.

POST OFFICE (CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE)—SICK PAY.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether clerks employed at the Central Telegraph Office, when absent from duty owing to illness for more than one day, are required to furnish a medical certificate; whether the chief medical officer and his assistants often grant leave of absence for this cause; and, whether, in all cases of illness proved to the satisfaction of the chief medical officer, he will grant full pay, as is given to other Civil servants of equal status?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): It is the case, as implied in the Question of the hon. Member, that the telegraphists at the Central Station, when absent ill for more than one day, have to furnish a medical certificate, and that such certificate is not unfrequently given by the medical officer. But it is not the case that in the matter of pay during illness the telegraphists are subject to different Regulations from other Post Office servants of corresponding rank.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION) ACT
—ASSENT OF TRUSTEES.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the case of the death of one or more of the Trustees, the Bank of England insists that the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee must accompany assent to the Conversion Scheme; if so, whether, with a view to facilitate conversion, he will consider the advisability of allowing the assent of surviving Trustees to be accepted, leaving proof of the deceased Trustee to remain for future action?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I have made inquiries at the Bank of England, and I

was given to understand that the authorities will not insist upon the probate or burial certificate of the deceased Trustee accompanying the consent to the Conversion Scheme. On the contrary, it has been agreed to facilitate arrangements by allowing the surviving Trustee to assent.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is able now to state in what manner the Local Government Board propose to deal with the electoral representation at the new London County Council of the present area of the City of London; and, whether they propose to avail themselves of the exception made in section 52, sub-section 5 (b), to the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, and give to the City area a larger proportion of representation than its population justifies; and, if so, in what manner, and to what extent?

THE PRESIDENT (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think I must ask the hon. Gentleman to allow me to reserve any statement as to the representation of particular areas until we come to the clauses of the Bill dealing with that matter.

COAL AND WINE DUES—RENEWAL.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will communicate to the House what course Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue with regard to the renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have not felt themselves at liberty to depart from the position they have taken up on this question. They are unable to give their support to the Bill suggested by the existing authority, and will leave it to the House at large to determine whether or not it is expedient that the Coal and Wine Dues should be renewed.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked, whether the Government would be prepared to give any facilities for discussing the question of the Coal and Wine Dues, which was a subject of the greatest importance to the ratepayers of London?

Colonel King-Harman

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have had no Notice of the Question, and my answer must be of the same character as that which I have just given. I cannot undertake to give facilities for a measure of this kind, for which the Government are not responsible.

MARKET RIGHTS AND TOLLS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, Whether any steps had been taken to fill the vacancy on the Royal Commission on Market Rights and Tolls caused by the resignation of the hon. Member for Londonderry?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he hoped that the vacancy might be filled up in a few days.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he wished to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question of which he had given him private Notice. It was in reference to the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) (Scotland) Bill. The second reading of that Bill had been objected to from the other side of the House. He had communicated to the right hon. Gentleman the desire of Scotch Members that a second reading should be given to the measure; and he begged to ask him whether he would be assisted in any way by the Government in getting the Bill put down at some future time in order that it might in the meantime be withdrawn?

THE FIRST LORD (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman had been good enough to send me a letter on the subject signed by several Scotch Members, to whose wishes I should be glad, if it were possible, to give effect. But the hon. Gentleman must be aware that there are many other hon. Gentlemen in the position he occupies—who have Bills in which they take great interest, and which are also interesting to other Members with whom they are associated. I greatly fear that if the Government were to make an exception in favour of one Bill, I should be pressed to make

exceptions for other Bills, for which it would be utterly impossible for me to afford facilities. Under all the circumstances, I am sure that at this very early period of the Session the hon. Member will have abundant opportunities of bringing forward his measure; and, in any case, should he not succeed in bringing it on, the object he has in view is covered entirely by a Bill of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (MR. Childers) has charge.

INLAND REVENUE (IRELAND)—CUSTOMS FRAUDS AT BELFAST.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) said, he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question of which he had given him private Notice—What was the nature and extent of certain frauds which had occurred in a Customs bonded warehouse recently in Belfast; what number of casks of bonded spirits was removed without payment of duty; how many casks were found in the warehouse of which no account had been taken in the Departmental books; what number of casks were found to contain water only; and, whether the Government intended to take steps to prevent these occurrences in Belfast bonded warehouses in future?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: On recently taking stock at one of the Customs bonded warehouses in Belfast it was found that certain casks of spirits containing together upwards of 2,000 gallons proof, and a cask of wine containing 58 liquid gallons, had been delivered without payment of duty by means of fraudulent alterations in the delivery orders. These frauds were the work of a defaulting servant of the proprietors of the warehouse; and the duty on the wine and spirits thus improperly removed from the bonded warehouse had since been recovered. Seven casks of spirits, of which no account existed in the official books, as well as five casks of water, were also found in the warehouse. There is, besides, some evidence of malpractices in regard to eight other casks, as to which further inquiries are being prosecuted. The Board of Customs are taking steps with the view of preventing the recurrence of these practices.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND
AND WALES) BILL.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked, with reference to the date of the second reading of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill, for which they had only 12 days for its consideration, Whether the First Lord of the Treasury could not find it consistent to give a longer time for the consideration of the measure? Twelve days were not enough for hon. Members to make themselves masters of this somewhat formidable measure. There had been no Bill like it since the Irish Land Bill or the Irish Church Bill, 18 days being given in the one case and three weeks in the other for consideration.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he fully appreciated the spirit in which the Question was put; but, looking at the course of Public Business, and having regard to the fact that the principal discussion on a measure of this kind must be in Committee, the Government felt it necessary to take the second reading of the Bill at the earliest possible period, consistently with due notice to the country and to the subject-matter of the Bill. Seeing that the President of the Local Government Board explained the measure at full length on Monday week, he thought that an interval of three weeks and a few days after that statement was sufficient for the consideration of the Bill by the country and by the House before they were asked to assent to its principle.

PUBLIC OFFICES—THE ADMIRALTY
BUILDINGS—THE NEW PLANS.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the First Commissioner of Works, When the new plans of the Admiralty Buildings would be laid before the House?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): The plans have this day been placed in the Tea Room, where they can be inspected by Members.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE
RETURNS.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I wish to ask the right

hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question with reference to the Eviction Returns before the Recess. In cases of proceedings under the Act of 1887, as the House knows, the tenant, on receipt of the notice, becomes a caretaker, and if he is put out of his holding I understand that that is not technically an eviction. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he will take care that the putting out of tenants who have thus been reduced to the status of caretaker will figure in future Eviction Returns?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Yes, Sir; the whole question of these Eviction Returns requires careful revision. I do not know any set of statistics more utterly deceptive, or that lead to more erroneous conclusions, than those eviction statistics which have been laid upon the Table since the time of the late Mr. Forster. The new Act necessitates some changes of form; and I am going into the whole subject, and will do my best to see that the particulars that the right hon. Gentleman asks for shall be given on the face of the Returns.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS—
PILOTAGE CERTIFICATES.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the question that a pilotage certificate only should be granted to a British subject as proposed to be enacted by the Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill would be considered by the Committee which was appointed on Monday last to inquire into the subject of pilotage; and, if not, whether instructions would be given to the Committee to do so; and what course the Government proposed to adopt with regard to those certificates at present held by foreign masters or mates authorizing them to pilot their own ships under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854?

THE PRESIDENT (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): No doubt it will be in the discretion of the Committee to take evidence as to the question referred to by the hon. Member. As regards the latter part of the Question, I may say that, pending the inquiry, those masters and mates who already

hold certificates will continue to hold them.

IRELAND—APPOINTMENT OF

MR. STONEY, J.P., D.L.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Was there any truth in the statement that Mr. Stoney, J.P., D.L., of Rosturk Castle, County Mayo, had recently been appointed by the Lord Chancellor as one of the district collectors under the Court of Chancery; and whether, if so, Mr. Stoney is the same man who had recently been censured by an official of the Local Government Board, Mr. Hicks, with having been guilty of gross misconduct in the distribution of public funds entrusted to him by the House; and, whether he had also been censured by the Lord Chancellor?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have no official information on the subject. I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the Lord Chancellor has nothing whatever to do with the appointment. It rests with the Land Court.

MR. DEASY: Will the right hon. Gentleman draw the attention of the Judges of the Landed Estates Court to the facts I have recited?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid such a proceeding would be entirely beyond the functions of the Executive.

MR. DEASY: I beg to give Notice that on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House I shall draw attention to this matter.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—QUESTIONS THEREON.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I wish, Sir, to put a Question to you on a point of Order with reference to the Report of Ways and Means. I have a general inquiry to make of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to his Financial Statement last night. What I wish to know is, whether I can make that inquiry on the Report of the Resolution relating to the Wine Duties, which seem to me to raise the whole question of the Financial Statement?

MR. SPEAKER: Any inquiry or discussion would only be relevant which referred to the subject of the Resolution which was passed last night in dealing

with the Wine Duties. The noble Lord, therefore, upon that Resolution would have to confine his remarks to the Wine Duties.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: The question is not without importance. I suppose I am right in assuming that the grants in aid of local taxation for the present year remain practically the same as last night. Am I also right in assuming that, in addition to those grants in aid, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to give to local taxation resources an amount equal to about £1,700,000? If I am correct in those two assumptions, I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Question which he will see has a most important bearing on the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill. Will that additional grant of £1,700,000 be dependent and conditional on the Bill passing into law—that is to say, that if it does not pass into law will this further grant of £1,700,000 be withdrawn, and will the grants in aid of local taxation remain as they are at present?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am much obliged, and so is my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, to the noble Lord for having put this Question. The grant of £1,700,000 will be entirely dependent on the passing of the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill. There is a clause in that Bill which regulates the temporary arrangement before the new authorities are established; but if the House should reject the whole scheme of Local Government the whole scheme of the re-adjustment of the local and Imperial finance would fall to the ground at the same time, and have to be considered in succeeding years when Parliament might feel disposed to take a different view. It is most important that it should be understood that the proposed re-adjustment of local and Imperial burdens must depend upon the plan as a whole, and is dependent upon its being carried as a whole. If the plan as a whole is not carried, we shall remain as we are; the grants in aid of local taxation would continue to be given this year, and that relief will not be given which this and previous Governments have always intended to be

part and parcel of any general scheme for the reform of local government.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RELIEF OF LOCAL TAXATION (SCOTLAND).

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.): I wish to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with regard to the distribution of the £240,000 proposed to be paid in aid of local taxation in Scotland, Whether it is intended that the Secretary for Scotland shall issue a scheme for the distributing of the Fund; and, if so, when that scheme will be laid on the Table of the House?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The matter will be dealt with at the earliest possible date; but, of course, it will be for Parliament to vote the sum, and Parliament will then be informed of the proposals of the Government. With regard to the disposal of the sum, action will not be taken without a Parliamentary Vote having been obtained.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—THE DUTY ON HORSES.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I wish to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the proposed Horse Tax, Whether the tax of £1 to be placed on certain horses will include ponies; and, if, not, under what height those animals are to be exempted from the tax? I wish to ask, further, whether the tax of £5 on race-horses will include horses ridden in steeplechases?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): As my right hon. Friend warned us on this Bench last night that we scarcely knew the difference between a horse and a cow, it would be most imprudent on my part to answer any Questions without taking measures for consulting with those who are intimately acquainted with the details of steeple-chasing and horse-racing. My right hon. Friend was not able to give me Notice of the Question; but I will take care that the whole question as to the breeding of horses shall be most carefully considered. With regard to the question of ponies, I shall put them precisely on the same footing as when the old Horse Tax was in force—that is to say, they will have to pay.

Mr. Goschen

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DEFINITION OF A "PLEASURE HORSE."

Mr. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) said, he wished to put a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to horses. He understood that among his constituents there would be great difficulty in defining what a "pleasure horse" was. He therefore asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could state, rather more definitely than he had done yesterday, what he meant by a "pleasure horse" or a horse kept for pleasure, as definiteness was of importance in that matter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Of course, the definition is difficult; but, speaking broadly, horses used for trade will be exempted, and horses employed in what may be called pleasure and kept as a luxury will be taxed. There are horses just on the border between those two classes which will have to be clearly defined; but it will be more satisfactory that the hon. Member and the House generally should see the Resolution, and then judge as to the matter, rather than that I should make a further statement on the subject. But in the few days that will intervene before the House meets again I shall pay due attention to all the definitions, and give full weight to the suggestions which have been made on this very important question.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)

—THE EDUCATION CODE, 1888.

In reply to Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it would not be necessary to bring the more important Articles of the Scotch Education Code into operation before the 30th of April. Under these circumstances, if an Address to the Crown was put on the Paper on the 13th of April, and moved before the 27th, the hon. Member would be in ample time to obtain the judgment of the House upon any proposal he might make.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY BILL.

EXPLANATION.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand,

Westminster) said, he might be permitted to offer a word in explanation of some observations which had fallen from him on a previous occasion in regard to the Westminster Abbey Bill. It was supposed that he had referred to the position of Mr. Christian, the architect of the Ecclesiastical Commission. The work at Westminster Abbey would be carried on primarily under the direction of Mr. Pearson, the well-known architect, than whom a more able and competent person probably could not be found. But Mr. Christian would represent the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as the body through whom the money necessary for the repair and restoration would be advanced. The work would be strictly in the nature of repairs, and not of alterations.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS COMMISSION BILL.—[BILL 191.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Powers of Commissioners).

MR. FIRTH (Dundee), in moving, in page 2, line 5, to insert the word "twelve," instead of "three," said, that the object of the Amendment was to increase the amount of imprisonment which the Commission might award to a witness for contempt of Court, that contempt of Court consisting of declining to answer questions put to him on matters which the Commissioners had to inquire into. Having regard to the character of the noble Lord and others who constituted the Commission, he submitted that that was not too much power to give them. He was of opinion that 12 months might be deterrent, while the shorter term of three months might not.

Amendment proposed, in line 5, to leave out the word "three," in order to insert "twelve."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Clause."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr.

MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he thought the hon. and learned Member would not persist with the Amendment when he came to consider that this was a pure case of contempt of Court. In the Trades' Unions Commission power was given to the Commissioners to commit a man for three months if he was guilty of contempt of Court. In the Belfast Riots Commission a similar power was given, and he believed that the same term of imprisonment for contempt of Court was contained in one of the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Prevention Act. Of course, he agreed with the hon. Member that they might trust to the discretion that would be exercised by the Court; but he was of opinion that it was unnecessary to increase the power of imprisonment.

MR. FIRTH said, he believed that a longer term of imprisonment than three months had been inflicted where there had been contempt of Court in Election Petitions, where a witness declined to answer questions put to him by the Election Commissioner. In one case a man was sent to prison for six months, and in the case of this Commission it was certainly one which demanded that the objects of the Legislature should not be defeated.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 (Indemnity to witnesses).

MR. FIRTH said, that this was the clause upon which he had asked a Question last night—namely, whether any provision had been made for the payment of witnesses who were required to give evidence before the Commission? Probably some Member of the Government would answer that Question now.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he understood that the Commission had been drawn up in the ordinary form. The practice was for the Commissioners to call before them such witnesses as they required, and to exercise their discretion in the matter of paying their expenses. The Commissioners would have power to refuse the expenses of a witness if they considered that he had not spoken the truth.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment.

MR. MATTHEWS: I think there will be no objection if I now move that the Bill be read the third time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews*),—put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) (LAND COMMISSION) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [26th March].

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for the better disposal of the business under the Land Law (Ireland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said, that the Bill was a most disappointing and unsatisfactory answer to the request which had been made to the Government ever since the beginning of the Session, not only by the Irish Members who sat below the Gangway, but also by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). The grievance which it was supposed that the Bill would remedy was that there was a block in the Land Court which prevented tenants receiving the benefit of the Land Act. This block existed in every county in Ireland at the present moment. If the Question Papers were looked over for the last five or six weeks it would be found that nearly every Member representing a popular constituency in Ireland had complained of the glut of cases in his constituency; but they had all been put off from time to time with the excuse that the matter was under consideration, or that there was a lack of men of sufficient legal standing at the Irish Bar to do the work. Take his own constituency of County Dublin, where the block was, perhaps, not so bad as in other places, though even there it was quite bad enough. In the years 1881 and 1882 the tenants of the County of Dublin made an effort to get into the Land Courts; but a brief experience in those Courts induced them to drop that experiment, as the reductions given were

perfectly farcical, and in many cases preposterously small. In some cases—upon Lord Talbot de Malahide's estate, for instance—the rents fixed by the Sub-Commissioners exceeded the figures given by even the landlord's valuer. In consequence of this state of affairs the tenants ceased to trouble the Land Courts. Of late, however, they had gone in again, and those who had had their cases heard had been able to get sweeping reductions. But the bulk of them just on entering the Court, from which they had been kept out for five or six years, had been stopped on the threshold by what he considered was a conspiracy between the Government and the landlords to prevent the tenants from getting the benefit of the Act. The result was that the tenants must go on paying the old rack-rents which it was morally certain would, if the cases could be heard, be reduced from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. Being forced to pay these rack-rents they would get into arrears, and under the "eviction-made-easy" clauses of the Land Act of 1887 they would then be served with notices through the post, which would prevent them from getting into the Land Court at all. These circumstances had been present to the minds of the Nationalist Members during the past six weeks; they had also been present to the mind of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The landlords had grasped at Section 7 as an instrument for robbing their tenants and turning them out of their holdings, which the hon. Member for Tyrone did not expect, but which the Nationalist Members fully anticipated. Meanwhile the block of the Land Courts continued, and tenants were kept out who would otherwise, under the present scale of prices, obtain large reductions. At last the Government had brought forward an answer to their complaints. They had asked simply for an addition to the number of Sub-Commissioners, which was not an unusual demand, because such additions had been made again and again. Most of the excuses given by the Government for not following the usual course were preposterous and ridiculous. The House was told that there was not enough legal talent in Ireland, with 800 practising barristers, to fill 20 or 25 extra Sub-Commissionships. He remarked that the Solicitor General heard

the statement without any reproof. [The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Madden) (Dublin University) dissented.] Did the hon. and learned Gentleman object to the statement?

MR. MADDEN: It was not made.

MR. CLANCY said, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated in the plainest language last night that there was a lack of legal talent and ability at the Irish Bar. Whereas the right hon. Gentleman could find any number of Resident Magistrates possessed of legal knowledge to try conspiracy cases under the Coercion Act, which was a much more difficult thing in many cases than deciding points under the Land Act, he could not, forsooth, find barristers sufficiently learned to decide those points, most of which had been decided already. There were two objections to the Bill—first, that it postponed indefinitely the grievance which they lamented. No additional Commissioners could be appointed until the Bill passed, and thus the glut of the Courts would continue. The Chief Secretary for Ireland must be very sanguine, and the First Lord of the Treasury must have great confidence in the power of closure, if they thought this Bill was going through in two or three weeks. A Bill like this, which proposed to fix the constitution of the Land Commission for the next seven years, was a very important Bill, the clauses of which must necessarily attract a great deal of attention and criticism. He anticipated—what with the Local Government Bill, the Financial Scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and all the new versions of the British Constitution with which they were threatened—that the Bill would not get through till the end of the Session. The consequence would be that the glut in the Land Court would increase, and the tenants would be forced to pay rack-rents, with the result which he had stated. The second objection to the Bill was that it would hand over the settlement of cases from the Land Court to the County Courts. To compel the tenants of Ireland to go into the County Courts was to compel them to submit to robbery and confiscation. The House had passed several Land Acts of a beneficial character for Ireland. If the Acts of 1870 and 1881 had been administered in a fair, generous, and impartial spirit

the present Irish land crisis would never have arisen. Indeed, he believed that if the Act of 1870 had been properly administered the Act of 1881 would not have been required; and if the Act of 1881 had been administered in the spirit in which it was passed, there would have been no necessity for the Acts of 1882, 1885, and 1887. But the administrators of the Act of 1870, like those of the Act of 1881, killed the Act instead of carrying it out. They were County Court Judges and Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, and they were landlords to a man. A good many of them were subsequently proved to be rack-renting landlords. No wonder that the Acts which they administered proved insufficient to meet the grievances of the tenants. Now it was proposed to go back to the step that was abandoned in 1881, and to hand over the tenants of Ireland to be ground to powder by gentlemen who were, practically, of the same class, and who, although they were first-rate lawyers, were still so imbued with the landlord spirit that they could not possibly be expected to administer the Act in a spirit of fairness. The Land Commission Courts had been chosen by 99 per cent of the tenants in preference to the County Courts, and only two Judges of County Courts had had any considerable number of cases before them. The County Court Judges had been mistrusted by the tenants, and justly so, and yet it was to these gentlemen the tenants of Ireland were to be handed over to be still further robbed in legal fashion. The lay assessors who were to be appointed to advise the Judges would also be landlords' men. He had no confidence either in the promised additions to the strength of the Commission, because so many of the recently appointed Sub-Commissioners had been either rack-renting landlords or their agents. If this Bill was to be the answer to the requests of the tenants and their Representatives to have the Land Commission Courts strengthened, he might say that the idea of a good many tenants would be that the Plan of Campaign would be a very much better invention. The Bill was a fraud on the tenants of Ireland. It was insolent and an outrage, and, in his opinion, it was evidence of the conspiracy entered into between the Government and the landlords of Ireland.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland had, no doubt knowingly, raised a very large question indeed by the introduction of this measure. It was not a large one altogether from the point of view of the hon. Member who had last spoken, but it was from another point of view. They were placed in some difficulty, because the Chief Secretary, from the exigencies of time on Monday night, was unable to explain fully the object of the Bill and the motives which led him to introduce it. Therefore, in any observations he made he hoped his right hon. Friend would understand that if he was in error in any way it was because his explanation, under the circumstances of last night, was not sufficiently clear or complete. And if he opposed the Bill on insufficient ground, it would be in his power, as he had the right to reply, to enlighten the House more fully as to his measure. He understood the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) to oppose the Bill on two grounds—first, because it would take a long time to pass, and no additional Commissioners could be appointed to revise rents until it was passed; and, secondly, because, as representing the tenantry of Ireland, he did not profess the same amount of confidence in the jurisdiction and administration of the County Courts that he had in the jurisdiction and administration of the Land Commission. Those were two widely different objections, and he had some sympathy with the first, but none with the second. The County Court was, or it ought to be, an excellent tribunal for the determination of disputes about the hiring of land. He had been under the impression that the County Courts gave satisfaction to the mass of ordinary suitors who came before them. Undoubtedly, the County Courts had the advantage over the Courts of the Sub-Commissioners that the County Court Judges were trained lawyers who had had much experience in judicial matters and in litigation of all kinds. A County Court Judge was not picked up haphazard from the Irish Bar, as the exigencies of time or lower political motives might force Party Leaders to select adherents; but he was a man selected by presumed fitness for high judicial duty. Therefore,

a County Court ought to be theoretically the best tribunal for the settlement of these land disputes; that being the case, he did not sympathize with the hon. Member's second objection. But for the first objection of the hon. Member there was a great deal to be said. He understood there was a great desire on the part of the tenantry of Ireland to take advantage of the Bill of last year, and this was especially the case with leaseholders. An enormous number of applications for the valuation of land had been filed; and if the peace of Ireland was the first thing they ought to consider, means should be taken to deal with these applications without delay. Obviously, on a Bill of this kind, raising complicated issues, delay must arise before the very difficult, the burning question, of the valuation of land could be settled. On that ground the Chief Secretary for Ireland would do well to consider whether it would not be better to deal expeditiously with the more pressing difficulty of the valuation of rents on the part of the new claimants, the persons who had chosen to avail themselves of the privilege of going into the Land Courts, in order that they might not only suffer no injustice, but, what was equally important, that they might not think they suffered any. The Chief Secretary, by this Bill, had forced the House of Commons to review and re-examine the entire machinery set up by Parliament in recent years for the settlement of the disputes which existed in relation to land in Ireland. That machinery was most complicated, involved, and expensive; and, on the whole, he would say it was a machinery not characterized by sanity or reason, but rather, perhaps, by insanity and unreason. At present there were three separate tribunals for the regulation of the many disputes concerning the hire and sale of land which existed in Ireland, all of which were independent, and some antagonistic to each other. There was, in the first place, the old Landed Estates Court, an admirable institution, and he deeply regretted that that tribunal was not more regarded by Parliament in the earlier land legislation. Having all the machinery of a Court of Law, it cost the country between £12,000 and £15,000 a-year, and yet he believed he was not exaggerating when he said that at the present moment, and

for some time past, it had nothing to do, nor was it likely to have anything to do; as a friend had recently expressed it—"Literally the staff of the Court had nothing to do, except to read the newspapers and pass their time in the best way they can." It was set up by Act of Parliament in 1857, he believed, and it was a magnificent machine, but it was perfectly useless. Then there was the Land Commission set up in 1881; and, besides that, there was the Commission for the purpose of purchase set up by the Land Act of 1885. These two Commissions between them cost the country about £110,000 or £112,000 a-year. Now, would it be believed that those two Commissions were unwittingly neutralizing each others' acts? The more the Land Commission worked at the revising of rents, the more Parliament encouraged it to lower rents, the less the Commission for Purchase would have to do; the more the Commissioners of Purchase of Land had to do the less the Commissioners would have to do for the revising of rent, and yet they were keeping those two Commissions alive, and were encouraging them to find work for themselves, although it was obvious to even the meanest intellect that the objects the two tribunals were driving at were hopelessly incompatible with each other. It was worth the notice of the House and the public that these three tribunals cost the country from £130,000 to £140,000 a-year, and that they were independent, and two of them were absolutely antagonistic. The efforts of all this great land machinery had been to reduce the rental of Ireland by some £2,000,000 a-year, he believed, approximately, and it had cost the country over £500,000 to effect that reduction. Was that, he asked, common sense? He submitted it was not. And when the Chief Secretary brought in a Bill which was to add to the existing machinery the House was justified in calling upon the Government to review, not the policy, but the whole system of machinery regulating the dealing with land in Ireland. The Bill proposed to add £300 a-year to the salary of the County Court Judge, and to give him two assistants, who, he supposed, would receive between them close upon £1,000 a-year. The House did not know to what extent this was to apply. Was it to apply to the whole of

the County Court Judges in Ireland? If so, there would be no economy, and that could not be intended. On the other hand, all that hon. Gentlemen opposite more directly representing the tenantry asked for was a moderate and temporary addition of six or eight Sub-Commissioners to the existing machinery. He found that there had been a reduction in the number of Sub-Commissioners this year as compared with last year of 15, and he did not gather that the exigencies of the present rush into the Court on the part of the leaseholders demanded a more than temporary addition to the Land Commission of 10 or 12 Commissioners. If he had to choose between such temporary addition and a larger and more permanent addition that was to be made to the staff and salary of the County Court Judges, he preferred the proposal which emanated from the Benches opposite, because when the rents had been valued he imagined that the Commissioners would be dismissed from their appointments; whereas he had no security whatever that if the County Court Judge got an increase to his staff and salary he would readily part with either of those present adjuncts to his appointment. He was disposed to give great credit to the Chief Secretary for introducing this Bill, and for being unwilling to increase the expenses of the Land Commission by the appointment of additional Commissioners; but he should like to see the right hon. Gentleman aiming at a more perfect method of dealing with this great question of machinery for the settlement of land questions. The present measure of the Chief Secretary he did not think was large enough. If the right hon. Gentleman tried to unite the whole of the machinery for land disputes in Ireland into one, to be animated by one mind and one policy, and managed by one staff, whether as regarded the purchase or the valuation of land, that, he thought, would be an object well worthy of his great ability and of all the talent which he had shown in the administration of Irish affairs. That would be a worthy and a great object; but the Bill seemed to him, while recognizing the enormous evil and the absurdity of the present state of things, to afford no adequate relief for that state of things at all. He would much sooner see the more slovenly and less perfect method of Courts con-

tinued, and that the Chief Secretary should take time before presenting, as he hoped he would, to Parliament a complete scheme, than that they should have such a Bill as this. The great thing was to put this immense judicial machinery, which cost the country such an enormous sum of money, on something like a final and permanent basis. From the point of view of economy, and not less from the standpoint of the peace of Ireland, he attached great importance to what had fallen from hon. Members opposite. If the Government delayed the settlement of the claims of the tenants by legislation of this kind they might add largely to their difficulties in regard to administration. At the same time, the measure of the Chief Secretary was inadequate to the real evil as regarded the machinery of land litigation in Ireland, and he earnestly trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider it, and before long bring in a Bill to deal with the subject more largely and more permanently.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he did not think the House would be disposed to regret that, by the accident of last night, they had secured a little time for the consideration, not only of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, but of his proposal as embodied in his Bill. If they had secured nothing else, they had, at least, secured the most statesmanlike speech of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill)—a speech which would have its full weight and effect in Ireland. What were the facts of this question? In his speech last night the Chief Secretary for Ireland complained somewhat that for the last four or five weeks Members from Ireland had been pressing the Government upon the block in the Land Courts. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to believe that none of them pressed the Government without being severely pressed themselves. The block in the Land Courts was unquestioned, and there was not a single Member representing an agricultural constituency in Ireland who had not been importuned by his constituents to bring this question before the House of Commons. What was the result of the pressure they had been applying for the last four or five weeks upon the Government of Ireland? The Government

proposed to get rid of one grievance by creating a still greater grievance. What was the proposal in the first part of the Bill outlined by the Chief Secretary last night? As things stood now, an Irish tenant, who considered his rent an unfair rent, had the option or the choice of going to the Court of Quarter Sessions before the County Court Judge, or of going to the Land Commissioners' Court. The Bill outlined by the Chief Secretary last night proposed to destroy that option and that choice, and to force a certain number of tenants into whatever Court the Land Commissioners in Dublin thought fit to send them. The Land Commission in Dublin was set up as a kind of Committee of Selection who were to say to one set of tenants "Go here," and they must go, and to another set of tenants "Go there," and they must go; and, if he did not mistake, the end would be that the tenants would resolve to withdraw their originating notices and go nowhere. No one had ever heard him say, since he had had a seat in the House, either in or out of the House, one word calculated to either bring the law into contempt, or to reflect on the administration of the law. He had never used any such language, and he was certainly not going to do so that day. Let them reduce this proposal of the Government to the concrete and see what it meant. He would take the single County of Donegal. Outside the Barony of Raphoe, the County of Donegal was one of the poorest counties in Ireland. Who was the Chairman of that county; who was the County Court Judge? He had had for many years the personal friendship of Dr. Webb, a most brilliant, able, and conscientious lawyer, and, for his part, he should be ready to submit any case of his to Dr. Webb's judgment. But while he was perfectly certain that the County Court Judge in Donegal and the County Court Judges of Ireland generally would bring the utmost conscientiousness to the discharge of any duty they undertook, he asked the House if it was nothing to carry the sentiment of the people with them in the administration of this law? Who was Dr. Webb whom the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would place over the tenantry of Donegal? Dr. Webb was the author of *Confiscation versus Contract*. He was, or rather, he was formerly, the brilliant pamphleteer

Lord Randolph Churchill

of the Landlords' Committee, and went as near proving as mortal man could prove, that the whole Land Legislation since 1870 had been sheer robbery. Again he (Mr. T. W. Russell) said that, so far as he was personally concerned he was prepared to trust Dr. Webb, and to trust the whole of the County Court Judges of Ireland; but he maintained that the poor peasants in Donegal, and the poor peasants throughout Ireland would simply recognize that their case had been handed over to a landlord's man, and there would be one more grievance planted deep down in the hearts of the people. In all sincerity, and with no bitterness whatever, he asked the Government to pause before they took this step, to look well at what they were doing. Then he came to the question of the assessors who were to sit with the County Court Judge. They were called "Court Valuers." These gentlemen were very old friends. Everybody who had been concerned in the land question in Ireland had heard of Court Valuers over and over again. They appeared first of all about the year 1883 under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), but they were rejected by the House. They appeared in the Bill of last year, but were again rejected by the House. Why did they turn up now? The Chief Secretary for Ireland explained his action last night. He told the House that there was a difficulty in getting competent lawyers. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) should not be in the least surprised if the right hon. Gentleman heard of an indignation meeting in the Hall of the Four Courts to-day. But the right hon. Gentleman also said that there were difficulties in constituting fresh Commissions; that there were Treasury difficulties, and that time would be lost, and delay occur, if the Government were to appoint fresh Commissioners. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) wanted the House to understand what really lay at the bottom of all this. In his opinion, the Sub-Commission Courts — aye, even those chosen by the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — had felt themselves constrained by the circumstances and facts of the case to give very large reductions in rent, and he looked upon this proposal, and the tenantry of Ire-

land would look upon it, as simply a desperate effort to undo the work of the Sub-Commission Courts. The tenantry of Ireland would look upon this as a stay put upon the proceedings of the Sub-Commissioners, who, in his opinion, had been doing substantial justice all round, no matter what class they had been chosen from. They had not been fixing fair rents in view of family charges and mortgages that had been piled up in the past; they had been fixing fair rents in view of the state of agriculture to-day. He maintained that the tenantry of Ireland would look upon the proposal to hand them over to the County Court Judges, and to these Court Valuers, as a proposal simply to put aside the Sub-Commissioners, and he believed there would be great danger that the tenantry would refuse to go into the Court at all. He could not think that this was a result that the Government could wish to bring about. He said nothing about the peace of Ireland. He stood here to-day to plead for fair play between man and man, and what were they told? They were practically told by this Bill that unless they accepted the proposals regarding the reconstitution of the Land Commission, to which the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had referred — unless they accepted the proposals regarding the reconstitution of the Commission; proposals of the greatest magnitude, proposals of the utmost importance, proposals that would require to be debated for many an hour in the House before they were allowed to pass; they were told that unless they consented to this Bill as a whole, they would not get the part of it which was designed to relieve the block which existed in the Land Court. He thought the Government were committing another mistake in the thorny problem of Irish land legislation, and he could not help saying that he rejoiced that by the accident of last night, at all events, they had got time to discuss the Bill to-day, and that the tenants of Ireland would have time to look the proposals in the face during the Easter Recess. He very much mistook it, when the people in the Province of Ulster and elsewhere knew what was in store for them, this House did not hear of it loudly and strongly after the Easter Recess.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member who has just sat down has attacked with great and, I think, unnecessary bitterness of spirit a proposal which, in the nature of the case, he could only imperfectly understand. The sincere desire of the Government in putting forward that part of the Bill which throws additional work upon the County Court Judges was that great and rapid progress should be made with the cases now pending before the Courts. My noble Friend the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in his remarks, suggested, while quite recognizing that these arrears should be dealt with, that instead of a plan adumbrated by the Bill we should appoint 10 or 12 additional gentlemen, who should occupy themselves in dealing with these arrears. The plan of the Government is, in my opinion, far more calculated to deal rapidly with this question of arrears. We should have at once the services of 18 competent lawyers, with whom we should constitute 36 lay Commissioners, and they would undoubtedly be able to make extremely rapid progress with the business. But if hon. Gentlemen are so anxious before they see the proposals of the Government in print that they should be rejected, let them not blame me afterwards if the result is that arrears are not so quickly dealt with as they would have been by the Bill that I now propose to the House. The proposal of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), which met with the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite below the Gangway, and which, I believe, met with the approval of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), is a small proposal to deal with arrears. The Government proposal is a big proposal to deal with arrears. But, as I have said before, I do not wish to press it wholly without consideration for the views of those who represented the tenantry of Ireland. It is intended in their interests; and if they do not like it I am unwilling to force it down their throats. But I warn them, and the House ought to take the warning, that the result must necessarily be that the arrears will not be as quickly dealt with as under the plan which the Government propose. Let me deal with one aspect of the case, which, I think,

is misrepresented by hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member for North Dublin asked what we meant by saying that there were not a sufficient number of legal gentlemen at the Irish Bar, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone, with his lively imagination and vigorous rhetoric, had spoken of an indignation meeting in the Four Courts. For my own part, however, I do not think it likely that what I have said will be so singularly misunderstood in Dublin as it has been by some hon. Members in that House. What I said was that for appointments essentially temporary it was impossible to get such good lawyers to deal with difficult cases as if we went to gentlemen like County Court Judges, who receive large salaries and are appointed for life, and who are the pick of everything in the second flight of the Irish Bar. Can anyone seriously maintain that that could be said of the great mass of those whom he should be able to secure for the temporary work of Sub-Commissioners? I turn to the observations of my noble Friend the Member for South Paddington, which dealt with the second part of our proposals, on which I was hardly able to touch last night. My noble Friend said I was, wittingly no doubt, opening up a very large and important question. My noble Friend is right. I was opening up a large and important question by even touching the Land Courts in Ireland, but it was not by choice that I touched it. My noble Friend is aware that the Land Commission lapses this year.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Yes; quite so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Therefore, it does not rest with the Government to say whether or not we shall touch it. We must touch it; and my noble Friend, who is imperfectly acquainted with our proposals, thinks them inadequate, and that we ought to deal in a larger spirit of reform with the constitution of the Courts which have to do with the land. I will travel thus far with my noble Friend; I will admit that if I had unlimited time at my disposal, if I could ask the House to give many days and nights to the subject, I might propose to deal with the Land Courts as constituted by the Acts of 1881 and 1885 and with the Landed Estates Court in which Mr. Justice Monroe presides. But the time to carry a vast legal scheme of re-

form is not at my disposal. Everybody knows the important business with which the House will have to deal, and I am therefore obliged to cut down to the narrowest limits the Irish measures which it will be my duty to lay before the House, and it is for that reason that I cannot suggest to the House such a vast plan as my noble Friend would like me to take in hand. But I must inform my noble Friend that the scheme is not so utterly insufficient as he supposes from the inadequate statement made last night. It is perfectly true that I do not propose to touch the Landed Estates Court in which Mr. Justice Monroe is doing such good work. I do not think that Mr. Justice Monroe is leading that life of dignity and ease which my noble Friend supposes. Mr. Justice Monroe will probably differ in opinion from my noble Friend.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he spoke on the highest authority.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: But leaving that Court aside, we do attempt some, as I think, very important reforms in the constitution of the Land Court. That Court consists of two practically independent Commissions. The Act of 1885 has been interpreted by the Land Court as obliging them to hand over the whole work of purchase to the Purchase Commissioners appointed under Lord Ashbourne's Act, and to abstain from any interference with their work. One result of that is that the two divisions of the Court appeared to take opposite sides. The Bill proposes to amalgamate those two Courts into one. We take powers for the Treasury to abolish that part of the Court dealing with the Land Question, supposing their work should come to an end. We do more than that. As the Court is at present constituted Judge O'Hagan, a lawyer of the highest eminence, is obliged to travel about the country dealing with small questions of fact with respect to which his legal knowledge is wholly unnecessary, and the two lay Commissioners spend their time in listening to the discussion of questions of pure law, as to which they are not in theory qualified to give an opinion. The Government propose to give more elasticity to the Court, to enable the lay Commissioners to decide questions of fact not of law, and on important questions of law to associate Judge O'Hagan with a Judge of the

High Court, and thus to strengthen the Court which has to do with purely legal questions. At the same time the Government are of opinion that Mr. Justice O'Hagan's great legal acquirements might usefully be employed in dealing with the legal aspect of the questions which come before the Purchase Commission. At present he has nothing to do with it. The Government consider that while they are committing a great waste of time in compelling Mr. Justice O'Hagan to deal with questions of pure valuation, they are also committing a great waste of time in not enabling him to deal with legal questions for which his great competence so well qualifies him. I think, therefore, that though our proposals do not go so far as my noble Friend desires, he will probably be inclined, taking into account the circumstances, to withdraw some of the criticisms which he passed upon the measure I introduced last night, and to admit that the Bill will necessarily cover some of the ground which he desires to see occupied.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, that a great deal of what his right hon. Friend had now stated was in addition to what he had said last night. What his right hon. Friend said last night had nothing to do with the Land Court.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My noble Friend is quite right. I got up to make my statement at a quarter to 12, and I was not able to put the whole case for the Bill before the House. What I would respectfully submit, as the best course for the House to adopt, is that the House should allow the Bill to be read a first time and printed. The provisions which it contains, whether hon. Members value them or not, were assuredly not to be condemned unheard. I will not show myself specially obdurate in pressing the details with regard to the Land Commission, but I should like even those details to be seen in print before the House rejects them. Let the Bill be printed during the holidays, and let hon. Gentlemen consider it in a cooler spirit than they have already shown. ["Oh, oh."] I do not wish to hurt their feelings, nor do I see any reason for the violent criticisms they have expressed; but hon. Members opposite have described the Bill as a conspiracy between the Government and

the landlords to prevent the tenants from coming into Court.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I never described it as a conspiracy.

MR. CLANCY: But I did.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone has stated that it was the last despairing effort of the landlord class.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the right hon. Gentleman totally misunderstood him. What he said was that it was another mistake on the thorny road of land legislation.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not further allude to what was evidently a casual rhetorical figure of speech. When the Bill was described as a conspiracy I trembled to think what might occur if the right hon. Gentleman opposite went beyond what was said by the hon. Member below the Gangway. My noble Friend the Member for South Paddington read out from the Estimates certain statements with regard to the Sub-Commissioners now at work. I cannot reconcile those figures with the figures laid before the House last night, and which I have now before me.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR observed that the figures in the Estimates were wrong. They had never been discussed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will read the figures again. In August there were 20 Sub-Commissioners, in September 30, and they continued at 30 to the end of November. The Government then, finding the arrears heavy, raised the number to 50, and at 50 they continued at the present moment. So far, therefore, from the number being fewer it has been raised from 20 to 50. I will now compare the present state of things with what occurred in 1882. I observe that for eight months of 1882 the arrears stood, roughly speaking, at about the same figures as they are now, and the eight months began with a strength of 36 Sub-Commissioners and ended with 51; so that with substantially the same amount of work now the number of the Sub-Commissioners remains substantially the same as in 1882. I think I have now explained to the House some of the things I should have liked to have explained last night. I hope I have, at all events, gone the length of inducing the House to allow the Bill to be printed

and considered by hon. Members at their leisure; and I shall not show myself too obdurate on the question of the County Court Judges, if on a sober review of the facts the House holds the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that the great legal talent which is now possessed by the body of County Court Judges should not be utilized for dealing with difficult land cases—cases on which questions of law of such difficulty have arisen that the Superior Court has been largely upset in its arrangements by the number of legal questions it has had to decide. If the House should think that all this legal talent should be wasted, of course I shall raise no serious objection, although I ought to point out to my noble Friend that if that decision is arrived at it will be entirely inimical to those interests of economy and efficiency of which he is so able an advocate. But if the House should decide, in spite of all these considerations, that it would prefer the present system, I am afraid the arrears will not be dealt with so quickly and so effectively as by the plan I propose, but it will not be my business to imperil the other reform which this Bill suggests, and which I hope we shall see carried into law.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, there were two admissions he would at once make. The first was that it would be eminently reasonable, without challenging any Division, which, in point of fact, could not raise the issue fairly between the different opinions entertained in the House, that this Bill should as soon as possible be brought in; the second admission was that it was certainly very unjust to complain of the Government for not making this the occasion of introducing into the whole Land Court system of Ireland all the improvements that possibly it might be susceptible of. In point of fact, that would be to give additional force to the very thing that was complained of—the delay in meeting the great, urgent, and grievous want there was, not only connected with judicial improvements, but connected also with the social order of the country. The difficulty he found in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that there was nothing whatever in it to show or explain whether, in his opinion, the method the House understood him to propose would be the speediest method

Mr. A. J. Balfour

of dealing with the accumulation of business. On the face of it, he thought the House was driven to a directly opposite conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to entrust the whole of this business to a body of men very limited in numbers, having much else to do besides this land business. It was quite evident, from the difference of opinion that prevailed in the House, and from the fact that the Irish Members who had spoken appeared to take but one view upon the matter, that, whatever might be the abstract merits of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, there was a great body of opinion directly at variance with him upon a question which seemed to him (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to be all important—namely, the question of providing for the discharge of this business in the most rapid and effectual manner. The choice evidently lay between the plan of the right hon. Gentleman and a large temporary extension of the judicial strength in the shape of Sub-Commissioners, who were already at the command of the Government if they chose to seek them. He apprehended that there could be no doubt that the Government had sufficient material at their command to adopt the latter alternative; quite as much material as Mr. Forster had at the time when he had to encounter still greater difficulties. Having before him in that way the guidance of experience, he had generally felt that the method then adopted was a rapid and effectual method without including the County Court Judges. The House was now asked to believe—although at present the action of the County Court Judges was not excluded, but their collateral assistance was availed of—that to restrict this business to the County Court Judges alone, assisted by valuers, would produce a more rapid settlement of the whole matter than was effected under the former system. It was extremely doubtful, to his mind, how far the use of these valuers would in any way expedite proceedings; but supposing the use of valuers to be necessary, there was no reason why, if the want of valuers was the essential flaw in the present system, a greater amount of assistance in the shape of valuers should not be given. There was before the House a proposal that the Government should proceed by its Executive authority, subject, of course, to the ap-

proval of the House, to enlarge very considerably the number of Sub-Commissioners, with a view to extended action, leaving the County Court Judges to render all the assistance in their power, as they had already rendered it. That surely had on the face of it the presumption of being a more rapid and effectual method of proceeding than that of trusting to the County Court Judges alone or limiting the action of the Sub-Commissioners, if not throwing it aside altogether. The appearance of the plan of the right hon. Gentleman for dealing with a matter in reference to which extension was the one thing necessary, not only for the satisfaction of the parties, but also for the social order of the country, was that of a great limitation of the means available for action; and the right hon. Gentleman, although he had explained himself fully and freely on the subject, had not shown that enlarging the powers of the County Court Judges would be so effectual a method as an extension of the number of Commissioners.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN) (Dublin University) said, he rose for a moment, in consequence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland having exhausted his right of speaking, to make clear one point which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had raised. This Bill did not in any way propose to do away with the action of Land Commissioners or of the Sub-Commissioners. Whatever might be the merits or demerits of the proposal, it did not in the least interfere with their action. It was merely intended to supplement their action to a very considerable extent, and, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had pointed out, the existing system included the action of the County Court Judge. The County Court Judge was part of the existing system, and he was at present assisted by a valuer; but the employment of a valuer stood on a totally different basis to that of a Sub-Commissioner. There were, therefore, at present two systems—namely, the Sub-Commission and the County Court Judge assisted by a valuer. Without going into the question of the extension of the work of the County Court Judge, so far as the Bill strengthened his position by giving him more competent assistance, he thought that portion

of the Bill would commend itself to the judgment of the House. With reference to the observations which fell from the hon. and learned Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), he (Mr. Madden) should be sorry to listen in silence to any imputation on the Body to which it was the great honour of his life to belong. But he understood the observation of the Chief Secretary exactly in the opposite direction to the interpretation put upon it by the hon. and learned Member. It was not a question as to the ability of the Irish Bar. What the Chief Secretary intended to convey was that it was very doubtful whether it would be possible to get the same class of men to fill the position of Sub-Commissioner, appointed temporarily, as they would to fill the position of County Court Judge; whether it would be possible to get men of position and practice at the Bar to leave that position and practice for an appointment which was temporary. That was the statement in which he acquiesced.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, with reference to the last remark of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he had to remind him that the Government were not confined in their choice of legal members to the Irish Bar, and one of the most respected Sub-Commissioners at this moment was a solicitor. The Government were perfectly able to choose from that branch of the Profession as well as from the Bar. The House wanted to know what was going to be done with reference to the cases now listed. To introduce what would evidently be a severely disputed Bill, was the most extraordinary method of expediting the business they were all desirous to see completed. From the elaborate exposition which the Chief Secretary had given, it was clear that a great amount of discussion would take place upon the Bill, and that its passing through the House would occupy many weeks, without even then entailing any undue discussion, and during the whole of that time the block in the Land Courts would continue to increase. He feared that the Bill, which had been prepared to meet a temporary pressing emergency, had been framed in a way which would prevent it from fulfilling its purpose. Before sitting down he wished to ask whether there was to be any increase of salary for the County Court Judges? If

Mr. Madden

there were, the proposal would have to be discussed fully, for there was a good deal to be said on that subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that by the indulgence of the House he would endeavour to answer the question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. As the right hon. Gentleman was aware, each Sub-Commission had at its head a legal gentleman, who received £1,000 a-year. The idea of the Government was, that for that gentleman they could substitute a lawyer, to whom they would certainly not have to pay £1,000 a-year, or anything like it. But they did think that, as much additional work was thrown upon that lawyer, it would be proper that the Treasury should pay him something. He did not read that part of the Bill at all last night, but he casually mentioned £300 a-year. He said that if this heavy work was thrown upon these lawyers £300 a-year would be a fair substitute for the £1,000 which they were now obliged to pay.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, the best thing for the Government to have done would have been to appoint a few additional Sub-Commissioners to help over the glut. He condemned the proposal of the Government to split up the Head Land Commission and allow the two lay Commissioners to run in pairs, whilst the only man of the Chief Commission who had shown sympathy with the tenants was to be put under the shadow of a Judge of a Superior Court, who was never appointed with special fitness for the trial of cases between landlords and tenants. He would warn the Chief Secretary that his proposals were dangerous to the peace of Ireland, because the tenants and their Representatives would not place confidence in County Courts. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had not treated the House fairly in slipping out a few sentences last night, which were apparently of no importance, and then coming down to-day with a proposal which meant handing over to the landlord class in Ireland the hearing of cases between landlord and tenant; but neither the tenants nor their Representatives would permit the right hon. Gentleman to carry the cases wherever he liked. The County Court Judges were the very men who had de-

nounced from the Bench the combination of the tenants, on many occasions, in violent harangues, and yet the Government wished to force the tenants into the Courts of those officials. What would satisfy the Irish Members was the withdrawal of the Bill for a few weeks, and meanwhile the appointment of some additional Sub-Commissioners. If the Government were really desirous for the peace of Ireland, they would listen to the warnings of the Irish Representatives, who made no undue proposals to them. This was a measure that it would take a whole Session to discuss; and if it was the only answer the Government had to make to their modest and peaceful request, it was only mocking them.

Mr. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, he was sorry to interpose in the debate; but he desired to point out that for weeks and months past there had been a glut in the Land Court. If this Bill was introduced to-day, and considered some time after the holidays, the glut would continue, and there would be no apparent means of relieving it. Though he did not like to oppose the introduction of any Bill, he thought it would be wise for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to withdraw the portion of the measure referring to County Court Judges, and reserve that part dealing with the renewal of the powers of Land Commissioners as a subject for future discussion. Might he be allowed to ask the Chief Secretary to consider one point? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) had admitted one objection to the Bill by stating that the tenants had hitherto had power to go to the County Court Judges. There had been this glut in the Land Court, the tenants had complained of it, and yet for all that they had not gone to the County Court Judges. Now the Government were proposing to force the poor tenants to go to the County Court Judges, which, even in the face of the block in the Land Court, they had refused to do. His hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) had referred to the "Court Valuers." In Ireland they had always had a great objection to Court Valuers. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) suggested the appointment of Court Valuers

some years ago, he (Mr. Lea) gave to the proposal his strongest opposition. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) very properly said just now, that in matters such as this they must consult the sentiments of the people as well as the facts. The reason of the objection of tenant farmers to Court Valuers was that they had noticed that every time there had been a rise in the rents, it had always been preceded by a visit and a fresh valuation by such valuers. Just now reference was made to Mr. Justice O'Hagan. Might he call the attention of the Chief Secretary to the fact that another member of the Land Commission was also a lawyer. Mr. Litton was an eminent counsel, and had devoted great time and ability to the work of the Land Commission. He (Mr. Lea) hoped that in any reorganization the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would not forget Mr. Litton's devotedness and honesty of purpose.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he hoped that the part of the Bill, whether good or bad, referred to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Lea), would not be withdrawn without substituting something in its place. He thought it would be better to have a systematic and complete machinery such as that existing in India, set up for effecting the object with which the measure was concerned. It would not be expedient to make the County Courts special tribunals for trying a special class of cases, unless they were relieved of their ordinary business. It would be wise, in default of a better arrangement, to withdraw a certain number of County Court Judges from the present sphere of their duties, in order that they might devote themselves exclusively to the work which the Bill would render necessary.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked, whether any steps were to be taken to relieve the glut in the Commissioners' Court during such time as would be occupied in passing the Bill through the House. What did the Government propose to do in case the Bill should not pass?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the Government would consider some scheme for temporarily relieving the block in the Land Courts. He hoped the House would have an opportunity of arriving

at a decision on the Bill after it had full knowledge of what it really contained.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, that unless a few additional Sub-Commissioners were appointed, a crisis of very grave importance to the country would be created.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Colonel King-Harman.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 199.]

M O T I O N S .

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39 and 129 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order, or Provisional Certificate, be extended to Thursday 5th April.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

COMMONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Land Commissioners of England, certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in respect to each such Provisional Order, to inquire and Report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament; and, if so, whether with or without modification, and in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order be remitted to the Land Commissioners.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members, Seven to be nominated by the House and Five by the Committee of Selection.

Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Richard Power, and Mr. Wroughton were nominated Members of the said Committee, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

VACANT GROUNDS (NUISANCES PREVENTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to prevent Nuisances on Vacant Grounds and Disused Burial Grounds, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 197.]

Mr. A. J. Balfour

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to exempt the Victoria University and the Colleges thereof from the operation of the Act of the ninth year of the reign of George the Second, chapter thirty-six, and to extend the privileges of the Graduates of the said University, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Jacob Bright, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Whitley, Sir Lyon Playfair, and Mr. Francis Powell.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 198.]

ADMISSION OF STRANGERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Admission of Strangers do consist of Nine Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of, —Mr. Bartley, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Fulton, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. David Plunket, Sir George Trevelyan, and Viscount Ebrington, with power to send for persons, paper, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [March 26] reported and agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday, 5th April."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked, whether the House was to adjourn at 7 o'clock, or after the Evening Sitting?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that it was usual to adjourn for the Recess after the Morning Sitting.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question with reference to the course of Public Business after the Recess. There was obviously a great deal of work before the House, and much would depend upon the goodness of the arrangements made for the carrying of it on. A great deal of the matter of the Tax Bill would depend upon the judgment given by the House upon the Local Government Bill. With reference to so large and complicated a measure, a considerable number of Members would be desirous of expressing their opinions, and he could not conceive that the former

Bill could be prosecuted without progress having been made with the latter, and should therefore suppose it to be for the general interest to expedite the progress of that Bill as far as possible. When it came forward, so far as he and those near him were concerned, they had a very strong desire to expedite as far as possible the second reading of the Bill, which was fixed for the 12th of April, as well as the stage that would carry the Bill into Committee, so that practical judgments on the various points might be begun to be taken. It would not, he imagined, be possible, to go into Committee until some reasonable interval had elapsed from the second reading. So that hon. Members might have every opportunity of placing Amendments on the Paper; but so far as that stage was concerned, he hoped that no step would be taken in a hostile spirit which would be likely to greatly prolong the proceedings at it. After the second reading, he supposed it would be the desire of the Government to make the proceedings in connection with the Bill as continuous as possible, and to apply their whole strength to dealing with its very important propositions. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if he would be good enough to expedite the Return of the number of Agrarian Outrages for the first quarter of the year, so that it might be ready when the House met again. He also asked for a Return showing a comparison between the state of things during the first six months of the Coercion Act and the first six months of the Crimes Act of 1882. He thought it also desirable to extend the Return, so as to give an account of the state of things for the six months preceding the Act of 1882 and an account of the state of things for the quarter which would have expired before they met again.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he would do all he could to expedite the Return first mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman. As to the exact period after the quarter had elapsed when the Return would be presented, he was not able to make a statement. But he would take care that there was as little delay as possible. The other request of the right hon. Gentleman would involve a retrospective

and a prospective Return. He thought he could at once say that he would give the prospective extension for the periods after the respective Acts came into operation; but he was not sure whether the materials existed for giving the retrospective Returns.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he thought it was understood on the previous evening that the Resolutions in Ways and Means not previously dealt with should be considered on Monday, the 9th of April. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) would see the necessity of proceeding without much further delay, as important changes in taxation would be effected that ought not to be delayed beyond a reasonable period. The second reading of the Local Government Bill was fixed for Thursday the 12th of April, and it was hoped that the debate would conclude on Friday evening. ["Oh, oh!"] He had reason to hope that, notwithstanding the desire of Members to take part in the debate, with the assistance of the Bill itself, which was in the hands of Members, the debate might be continued, and, if he might make an appeal to hon. Members who had Motions for that day to forego their rights, concluded on Friday, April 13. They proposed to go into Committee on the Bill on Monday, April 23, which would allow an interval of at least a week after the second reading. Having regard to the facts that the Bill was already in the hands of Members, and that there could be no alteration in its character before the second reading, it would be in the power of hon. Members, who would have ample time for the purpose, to prepare such Amendments as they might think desirable. No doubt, the time was rather short, but as the House was prepared to consider the measure in a fair spirit, there was not the same necessity for considerable delay as would exist with regard to a measure which was likely to be hotly contested. He was in the hands of the House, but he hoped the House would go on with the Bill from day to day as nearly as possible, taking Morning Sittings on Tuesdays and Fridays, so as to enable the Bill to be dealt with in a manner worthy of the subject.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he was afraid the natural relief they all felt at the cessation of

their labours was, so far as the Irish Members were concerned, largely dashed by the operations of the Government in Ireland. He was sorry to say they always found that there was a great distinction between the action and the policy of the Chief Secretary for Ireland when he had the vigilant eye of Parliament upon him, and his action and policy when Parliament for the moment had disappeared. He did not know whether the habitual self-satisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman enabled him to take a survey of the state of Ireland and the results of his policy, but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) must say that though he had seen many Coercion Acts fail, he did not think there had ever been a failure so profound and abject as that of the present Coercion Act. What was the case of Ireland at present? To a large extent, the right hon. Gentleman had thrown up the sponge. Some of the grossest uses of the Coercion Act had been given up. A short time ago, they had the right hon. Gentleman arresting and imprisoning a number of Members of Parliament on the ground of publishing reports of suppressed branches of the National League. The right hon. Gentleman had ceased to make these prosecutions, and at the present moment the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), the Member for the College Green Division of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan), and the Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper) were, in their three newspapers, publishing reports of the very suppressed branches which consigned them to prison a short time ago. Therefore, the House found that this iron Minister of unbending will had already run away from one of the main planks of his campaign. Addressing a meeting at Stalybridge on Saturday last, the right hon. Gentleman asked what measures the Government had ever taken against the liberty of the Press in Ireland? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought that when they put three editors of newspapers in gaol, because of matter they reported in the columns of their newspapers, the Government were certainly interfering with the liberty of the Press. But the right hon. Gentleman had given up that form of attack, and now ran away from formidable enemies with a want of courage that was worthy of consider-

able reprehension—the right hon. Gentleman now ran away from powerful and formidable enemies and satisfied himself by attacking weak and small enemies. At the present moment there was a man in gaol for selling a copy of *United Ireland*, because that copy happened to contain a report of a meeting of a suppressed branch of the National League. But the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) who published every week of his life *United Ireland*, and circulated 70,000, or 80,000, or 100,000 copies of it, was walking about a free man. This miserable contrast between the terror of the right hon. Gentleman when he met a formidable opponent and his courage when he met a petty enemy was as grotesque a commentary upon his Irish policy as could be well conceived. The other day, speaking on the Arrears Bill, the right hon. Gentleman gave the House to understand, at least he conveyed the impression to the House, that evictions were not going to take place. But the right hon. Gentleman knew as well as any one in the House, and perhaps better, that if evictions did not take place, if multitudinous evictions were not possible, it was not because notices had not to the number of 4,000 or 5,000 been served on the tenants of Ireland. Why did not evictions take place? Was it because the landlords were merciful? Was it because the right hon. Gentleman had any sympathy with the tenants? In his (Mr. T. P. O'Connor's) experience he never heard of a Minister so callous to the sufferings of the tenantry of Ireland as the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary. If evictions were not to take place, it was because the right hon. Gentleman's heart had failed him, and because he knew that coercion had failed. If the right hon. Gentleman were to carry out the Coercion Act in the "*Bombastes Furioso*" manner in which he put it in force a few months ago, when Parliament was not sitting, he would require the whole *Corps d'Armée* to enable him to do so. What had the right hon. Gentleman done with regard to suppressed branches? If any one wanted to find the parts of the country in which the National League was strongest and most vigorous both in spirit and organization they would find that they were the very places where branches had

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been what was called "suppressed." The right hon. Gentleman amused the House by the statement that meetings did not take place at all. That was very curious if true, but unfortunately "if true" was a proviso applicable to a large number of statements made by the right hon. Gentleman. What happened when branches of the League were suppressed in County Clare? Meetings of the branches took place periodically and they were reported in the newspapers, and yet the right hon. Gentleman came down to the House and explained that the meetings did not take place at all. But at the very moment he was making that statement Colonel Turner was going about threatening the people with police attacks because meetings took place. He left it to Colonel Turner and the right hon. Gentleman to settle the delicate question of veracity between themselves. With regard to the rest of Ireland the right hon. Gentleman had not even made an attempt to deal with the branches of the National League. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not done so, because his action had a most invigorating effect upon the League. The right hon. Gentleman was a most able and most useful coadjutor of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. Harrington), who was the Secretary of the National League. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman was as much the Chief Secretary of the National League as he was the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. Now, he passed from the general policy of the right hon. Gentleman to one of the particular instances of that policy with which they had been favoured within the last few days. A meeting was called for last Sunday in the town of Youghal. He did not think a meeting was ever called for a more legitimate purpose; he did not think that there was ever a meeting called under circumstances of greater legality. What was the position of the district in the midst of which Youghal lay? The tenants on the Ponsonby estate were in a certain proportion leaseholders, and the right hon. Gentleman having purloined the Bill which the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) produced, brought in a Bill last year, and

passed it through Parliament, giving the leaseholders the same rights to go into Court as non-leaseholders. When the Bill was passing through Parliament a certain number of landlords endeavoured to filch from the tenants the rights which even their own friends in Parliament provided for the tenants. He would not go over again the story of the Mitchelstown estate, which was eloquently told them by the hon. Member for North-East Cork. He only mentioned it to note the fact that the leaseholding tenants on the Mitchelstown estate were running a race with the landlord to see whether the eviction or the Land Court would first be reached; the landlord trying to effect an eviction in order to get the tenants out of Court, and the tenants trying to reach the Land Court before evictions were realized. He did not think that anybody would ever forget the impression made on the House of Commons when the hon. Member for North-East Cork said he might in his advice to his tenants have been guilty of a technical illegality, but he felt bound to give the advice just as he would feel bound to stay the hand of an executioner when he knew that a reprieve was at the door. That striking and picturesque figure of speech described the case of the Ponsonby estate as well as the Mitchelstown estate; in fact, that figure of speech did not adequately describe the facts of the Ponsonby estate, for the very reason that the reprieve was not only at the door, but actually in the hands of the unfortunate beings whom the landlords sought to execute. What was the state of the case? The leasehold tenants on the Ponsonby estate had sent in notices to the Land Court, asking to have their rents revised. If the rents of the leasehold tenants on the Ponsonby estate be just and fair rents, why should the landlord have any objection to being brought before the Court? The Land Court would confirm the rents if fair, and would raise them if they were too low. But what occurred! When the tenants sent in notices to the Land Court, asking for a revision of their rents, the landlord then, and then for the first time, sent to the tenants notices of eviction. When the House was discussing the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman last Session, the right hon. Gentle-

man in his usual lofty manner, and with the hauteur of his ignorance, ridiculed the idea of men being evicted by the silent agency of registered letters. The right hon. Gentleman assured them that such an agency could not be largely employed, but, as a matter of fact, landlords all over Ireland were making far more use of the section of the Act which admitted of eviction notices being sent by means of registered letters than of any other section of the statute. The landlord on the Ponsonby estate or his representative sent notices of eviction by registered letter. The result was that the tenants lost their status and the Land Court was unable to hear their case or to revise their rent. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether he thought it was fair or decent on the part of the landlords thus by a side wind to attempt to filch the tenants of their right to have their rents revised. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not deny that the landlord was within his legal rights in taking this course, but he maintained that the landlord, or any other person who would stand by the strict letter of the law in a country like Ireland, was a disturber of the law and was a disturber of the order of the country. It was true that disputes had been going on between the landlord and the tenant of the Ponsonby estate; but surely, if the landlord were a wise man, he would not say a generous man, but a wise and discreet man, he would have seized eagerly the opportunity of making peace between himself and his tenants which the notices to the Land Court presented. If these cases had been heard by the Land Court, they would have been taken as test cases by the tenantry on other estates. He was sure other tenants would have been willing to pay to Mr. Ponsonby or his representative a rent exactly equal in proportion to the rent fixed by the Land Court, and therefore Mr. Ponsonby or his representative would have best served the interest of the estate by allowing the cases to be heard, and allowing the rest of the estate to be adjudged and tested by them, apart from serving the interest of the tenants and the peace of Ireland. He was not speaking without precedent. What took place on the neighbouring estate at Mitchelstown? A certain number of tenants went into the Court; the judg-

ment given in a few cases was accepted by the rest of the tenants, and the result was that the landlord and tenants were on thoroughly amicable terms. Evictions had ceased, disturbances, if disturbances there were, were now avoided, and Mitchelstown was one of the parts of the country which would give less trouble to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the landlord of the district than many other districts. If the excellent example of Mitchelstown had been followed on the Ponsonby estate, peace and tranquillity and kindly feeling would prevail instead of the bitter relations which now existed. Did anyone suppose that Mr. Ponsonby did not know this? He was sure Mr. Ponsonby was as convinced as he was that the very best course he could have taken would have been to accept the offer of the tenants, to allow the cases to go into Court, and let the remainder of the tenants abide by the result. Unfortunately Mr. Ponsonby was not a free agent. Behind Mr. Ponsonby stood the Cork Property Defence Union. The Union were taking the estate over from Mr. Ponsonby. Mr. Ponsonby, in a letter he wrote, declared very pathetically that he had ceased to be a free agent. Was the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who was so extremely anxious for the absolute liberty of every individual in Ireland, going to take any steps to relieve Mr. Ponsonby from the duress and coercion put upon him by the Cork Property Defence Union, because it was quite evident from Mr. Ponsonby's own admissions that if it were not for the coercion of this Union, he would have been willing to make terms with the tenants. What was the Cork Property Defence Union? He would not call it a gang of landlords, because that would be disrespectful language; but he would call it a body of landlords who were fighting the tenants not on their own estates, but on estates which did not belong to them. The hon. Member for South Huntingdon (Mr. Smith-Barry) was the head and front of the Cork Property Defence Union, and it was understood he supplied most of the funds of the Union. He would like to put a question to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman supported the Cork Property Defence Union, and the Union

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compelled or advised Mr. Ponsonby to hold out against the tenants, and not to give fair reductions. Did the hon. Gentleman adopt that course with regard to his own tenants? Did he refuse them fair reductions, or was it not the fact that the hon. Gentleman himself had made large reductions? He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had been told the hon. Gentleman had given as large as 30 per cent reductions. If the hon. Gentleman had made large reductions to his own tenants, two questions arose. The first question was, how was it that large reductions were just in his case and not just in the case of the tenants of other landlords? The second question was, if the hon. Gentleman had not given the abatements on account of their justice, but because of being afraid to fight his tenants, what kind of courage was it on his part to compel other gentlemen to fight their tenants? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary spoke about every person being allowed to do exactly what he wanted without pressure from anybody else. Why did he allow the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire to use pressure through the Cork Property Defence Union to prevent landlords coming to terms with their tenants? Was such pressure as the hon. Gentleman exercised calculated to conduce to the peace of Ireland? The hon. Member was the greatest offender against the peace, for the pressure he exercised upon others was a most fruitful source of disturbance. Such being the relations between landlord and tenants on the Ponsonby estate, a meeting was called for last Sunday. That meeting was announced two or three weeks ago. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was aware of that fact or not; but certainly if he was not, he was about the only Gentleman who followed Irish affairs who was not. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether, if he was going to proclaim a meeting, it would not be a great deal more decent on his part, as well as much better for the peace of Ireland, that he should give notice of the proclamation in due time. He did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman ever read any of the history of Ireland; but if he would favour the people of that country, over whom, unhappily, he at present exercised some influence, by devoting some

little of his large mind to the study of their annals, he would find there was nothing which had caused more exasperation, or had more frequently imperilled the peace of Ireland, than the very policy he was now pursuing—the policy of retarding the proclamation of meetings. He did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman ever heard of the meeting at Clontarf in 1843, a short time before they had the happiness of having the right hon. Gentleman amongst the inhabitants of this earth; but that meeting, although it was known for several weeks before that it was intended to be held, was not proclaimed until the Saturday, the day before the meeting was to be held. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden) would tell the right hon. Gentleman that the shortness of the notice very nearly produced a great massacre of people at that meeting. Well, the Chief Secretary, knowing for weeks that the meeting at Youghal was going to be held, did not proclaim it until five o'clock on Saturday evening. That was an invitation to the people to come there; it was an incentive to a collision between the people and the authorities. It was the most skilful preparation that could be made, if the right hon. Gentleman had such a terrible wish in his mind. Were they asking too much of the right hon. Gentleman when they requested that when again he proclaimed a meeting, he would at least proclaim it in time, and not a few hours before the people round the country side started for the place of rendezvous. He (Mr. O'Connor) was, he thought, justified in making this observation, that of all the astounding proclamations that ever broke up a meeting, even in Ireland, there never was a more astounding one than that which broke up the meeting at Youghal. It was not issued until five o'clock on Saturday evening, and the precious Resident Magistrate used in it words to the effect that it had been represented to him, being a Justice of the Peace in the County of Cork, by an information duly sworn, that a number of people would meet or assemble at or near Youghal; and that the object and effect of such meeting would be to lead to dissension or animosity between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects, and consequent breach of the peace. How could they have dissension in Youghal?

As a matter of fact, the people there were all of one mind. They could not produce animosity or difference of opinion amongst people who were all of the same opinion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would not find in Youghal a score of people who disagreed with the rest of the community on the subject of his policy, for they were practically unanimous in its condemnation. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the meeting would have had the effect of leading to dissension and creating animosity. The meeting would have done nothing of the kind. It was the policy of the Government which had led to dissension. The meeting would have had the effect of presenting to the landlord a united tenantry—and he (Mr. O'Connor) believed that to have a united tenantry facing a landlord was the best means of avoiding dissension in Ireland. Well, the meeting was proclaimed, and he could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on his selection of an instrument for carrying out his work, unless his object had been to select the very worst possible instrument. Amongst all the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, whom had the right hon. Gentleman selected to carry out the work? Why, none other than Captain Plunkett. No Chief Secretary who was anxious to preserve the peace of Ireland would have sent to a meeting of this kind, and on an occasion of this kind, so unfitted a person by his personal character and his antecedents, to appease and tranquillize the minds of the people with whom he had to deal. The Chief Secretary selected the man who, above all others, was a torch amongst the inflammatory elements of disturbance in Youghal. What was the history of Captain Plunkett? He was the hero of the telegram—"Don't hesitate to shoot them." A more cold-blooded, a more foul, a more ruffianly telegram was never sent by any official in that part of the world in any crisis of Irish history. What was the first duty of a magistrate, even in the face of peril, to the public peace? Why, not to shoot without hesitation, but to hesitate as long as he could against the shedding of human blood. Any Resident Magistrate who knew his business, in place of telegraphing "Don't hesitate to shoot," would have telegraphed "Hesitate to shoot until such an awful emergency

arises as will compel you to resort to that terrible means of preserving the peace." Captain Plunkett was the hero of that famous telegram "Don't hesitate to shoot," a telegram which had certainly done excellent service in defeating Tory candidates at bye-elections in this country. And that telegram had been sent, of all places in the world, to that very town of Youghal; but that was not the only association in the past between Captain Plunkett and the town of Youghal, for some time ago a young man named Hanlon was killed in some disturbances which took place there. He (Mr. O'Connor) would not go into the circumstances in which this young man's life was taken, but everyone knew that the feeling in Youghal was that the young man's life was sacrificed by Captain Plunkett; yet this man who was regarded in the district in that light, and who was the author of the telegram to which he had referred, was of all other men the one selected to preserve the peace of Youghal. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) gave the Chief Secretary and Captain Plunkett an easy opportunity of at once carrying out their proclamation and preserving the peace. His (Mr. O'Connor's) hon. Friend did not say, "We will hold this meeting in spite of you." What he said was, "We will assert our right to get into the place of meeting, but if you use force to prevent us we will submit quietly, and have the question tried in the Courts of Law." That took place in Ireland, but he (Mr. O'Connor) should call this an eminently English way of settling a matter of this kind. It was the course adopted by Mr. Saunders, lately Member for East Hull, in regard to a meeting in Trafalgar Square. Mr. Saunders had gone to the Square, made his speech, allowed himself to be arrested, and then allowed the Government of the day to bring him into Court in order that the matter might be settled in an English, constitutional method in the Courts of the country. The Member for North-East Cork adopted that view, and surely no step could have been taken more calculated to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, if his desire was to follow the English system. The hon. Member for North-East Cork approached the place where the police were; he kept the crowd back, so anxious was he to

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avoid even the appearance of disturbing the peace. There was a considerable space between the Member for North-East Cork and the crowd, as the hon. Member wanted to avoid giving even the semblance of an excuse to the magistrates for interrupting the meeting. He said, "I am going to hold this meeting—arrest me, commit a technical assault on me, and we will have the case tried in the Law Courts." If that had happened, the hon. Member would have turned round to the crowd and have asked them to disperse. He would have said, "I will try this case not by armed collision between you and the police, but in a Court of Law, and let a Court of Law decide between you and the police." He (Mr. O'Connor) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to point out a more peaceful and legal method of deciding between him and the people of Youghal. But legal and peaceful methods did not suit the right hon. Gentleman and his Government of "law and order." Of all methods, those which were antagonistic to the right hon. Gentleman were those which were legal and orderly. Well, what took place! Captain Plunkett, in his usual braggadocio style, said—"You must take the consequences," and did not arrest him. He sent detectives around, and before a word of anger had been spoken on one side or the other, or a blow had been struck, one of these detectives struck the horse which was harnessed to the car on which the hon. Member for North-East Cork and Canon Keller were standing. Everybody who was at all well acquainted with an Irish jaunting car must know that at any time a standing position in one of them was an extremely unsafe position to be in, and that if this detective had wished to imperil the lives of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Cork and Canon Keller, he could not have adopted a better course. The man struck the horse—a piece of wanton brutality which ought to have disgusted even Captain Plunkett and the Chief Secretary—and the result was that the crowd got excited, and Captain Plunkett got separated from his men and was assaulted. He (Mr. O'Connor) had seen descriptions of the injuries inflicted, and as a Christian, he must say he was sorry for them; but at the same time it must be evident to all, that Captain Plunkett had brought them on himself by his

brutal behaviour. If he had taken the course pointed out by the hon. Member for North-East Cork, the people would have dispersed quietly, and he himself would have been able to go safely to his home, and that course would have been a better one in the interests of law and order, though it might not have so well pleased the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He (Mr. O'Connor) did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was going to take proceedings against the Member for North-East Cork, but he did not think he would be so bold, since that hon. Member had become better known to the House and to the country than he had been. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would rather be inclined to run away from a prosecution, just as he had run away from the hon. Member's speech in that House, now that he knew that behind the Member for North-East Cork there were millions of English hearts who loved him as dearly as his own countrymen. The Chief Secretary had a few broken heads to his credit, and had bludgeoned a few people; but if that was his way of tranquillizing Ireland and making its people hug the idea of the Union, he (Mr. O'Connor) must say that if he and his Friends on that side of the House were Unionists, they would regard the Chief Secretary as the deadliest enemy of their cause, and if they were landlords they would regard him also as their deadliest enemy. They had within the last few days heard several speeches from the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). He would not ask that hon. Member to say all he had in his mind, but he knew that if he did say all he had in his mind he would say that, in his opinion, the policy most menacing to the Unionist cause in Ireland, and especially in Ulster, was the policy of the Chief Secretary with regard to the Land Question. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Hear, hear?] The Chief Secretary was estranging the tenants and ruining the landlords of Ireland, and let them look at the picture he had given them of the condition of the landlords. The Chief Secretary had given them a Jeremiad instead of a psalm over the result of his policy upon them. All he had to say was to beseech for mercy on behalf of these landlords for whom he had been using

coercion so savagely for months past. He (Mr. O'Connor) was not at all sorry to have the right hon. Gentleman in his present position instead of the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks Beach), for the latter would have been a much more dangerous opponent. Such speeches as he made and the general policy of the present Chief Secretary in Ireland was calculated to put an early end to the present unhappy struggle.

Mr. SMITH-BARRY (Hunts, S.) said, he should not have taken any part in this discussion if it had not been for a remark of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). In speaking of the Ponsonby estate, the hon. Member had made an attack on the Cork landlords, and more especially on himself (Mr. Smith-Barry), as head of an association known as the Cork Defence Union. He would tell the hon. Member—if he did not know it before—that that Defence Union was not an association of landlords at all. It was an association composed of all sorts and different classes of men, merchants, farmers, and landlords, and was in no sense a purely landlords' organization. He would tell the hon. Member, further, that the Cork Defence Union had not, and never had had, control over or management of the Ponsonby estate. That estate had from the beginning been under Mr. Ponsonby's own control. If it were not under Mr. Ponsonby's own control now, it certainly was not under the control of any association in the county of Cork. The hon. Member had made an attack on the landlords of the county of Cork and on himself (Mr. Smith-Barry) for instigating Mr. Ponsonby to exact such terms from his tenants as he himself would not ask, and as other landlords in the county of Cork would not venture to exact. He would like to tell the hon. Member, as he appeared to be somewhat out in his facts, that he noticed last night in a newspaper the hon. Member probably might have seen—an evening newspaper called *The Star*—an article entitled "Mr. O'Brien Interviewed," in which a good many of the facts stated by the hon. Member just now appeared, and that those facts were entirely out of accord with the true circumstances of the case. In the first place, with regard to Mr. Ponsonby—whom, he might say, was

one of the most honourable and kindest-hearted gentlemen that he ever had the honour of meeting, a gentleman who was as anxious as anyone possibly could be to do what was right and just to his tenants if they would let him—that gentleman possessed an estate in the county of Cork, the Poor Law valuation of which was about £7,000 a-year, and the rental of which was somewhere under £8,000. The Poor Law valuation in that part of the country, as everyone acquainted with the South of Ireland knew, was a high valuation, and the rental was by no means an excessive one. Mr. Ponsonby had been giving a reduction to his tenants for some years past, and he offered them 18 months ago, when they first put the Plan of Campaign on him, 20 per cent reduction on the old rents—the non-judicial rents—and 10 per cent on the rents judicially fixed. The tenants themselves demanded 35 per cent reduction on the old rents and 20 per cent on the judicial rents. The hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) wished to compare those terms with those he (Mr. Smith-Barry) was at that time giving. He certainly was not giving, nor had he at any time given, such reductions as those, nor did he know of any landlords in the South of Cork, or in the South of Ireland, who would have volunteered such terms as Mr. Ponsonby was asked to give. These rents had never been raised in the memory of man. They were old rents, which had been paid regularly by the tenants for generations, and for seven years up to the time when the Plan of Campaign was put on Mr. Ponsonby, 18 months ago, not more than half-a-dozen evictions had taken place. He did not wish to detain the House. This was somewhat in the nature of a personal explanation. He was not prepared to address the House this evening, but he would say this—that the landlords of the County of Cork, and, as far as he knew, the landlords of the whole of Ireland, had been and were only too anxious to meet their tenants in any fair and reasonable manner. The landlords of the county of Cork, some weeks previous to the Plan of Campaign being put on Mr. Ponsonby, held a meeting and declared themselves anxious to do everything they could to meet the fair requirements of the time. The vast majority of them had acted on that principle.

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Mr. Ponsonby, who, as he had shown, had offered fair terms, had also given his agent instructions, in any special case where the circumstances demanded it, to grant a special reduction beyond that which he had already promised. In making these few remarks he hoped he had vindicated the honour of his friend Mr. Ponsonby and the landlords of the county of Cork. He would say again that Mr. Ponsonby had endeavoured over and over again to get this matter settled if it could possibly be settled, and the reason why it had not been settled was that the demands of the tenants, or, rather, not of the tenants themselves, but of their advisers, Canon Keller and the hon. Member for East Cork, who had been instrumental in getting the Plan of Campaign adopted in the district, had been so exorbitant that it had been impossible to concede them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gave way just now to my hon. Friend the Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry), in order that he might reply to the personal attack just made upon him; and I think the House will be pleased with the brief, clear, and manly statement with which he defended not only himself, as an Irish landlord, but all the other landlords that have been aspersed by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool. But the hon. Member has not contented himself with an attack on my hon. Friend and on the Cork Defence Association; but he has gone in his usual style into topics concerning the government of Ireland. As I have no objection to his treating these subjects, neither do I object to the style in which he has chosen to do so; because never, in my wildest moments, did I expect that the hon. Member would show good taste or fairness in criticizing either the Government or myself. But I think that it would have been well if he had, before attacking the Government, and myself in particular, made up his mind as to the exact line which he intended to take. It appeared to me that in his speech he hesitated between two different lines of criticism. In one part of his speech he wished to assert that the Government were too violent, and then he turned round and desired to show that we are not now so violent in our policy in Ireland as we have been, because, as it seems, we are terrified by such

speeches as that which he has just delivered. I can assure the hon. Member that so far as we are concerned on this side of the House, against whom those speeches are directed, they have not the slightest effect in inspiring terror. The hon. Member in the course of his speech proceeded to criticize the conduct of the Government in Ireland last winter in interfering, as he declared, with the liberty of the Press. The hon. Member went further, and said that he was very much horrified at my audacity, that in a speech I made elsewhere—at Stalybridge, on Saturday night—I had not refuted that accusation. What I stated on Saturday night with reference to the accusation of interfering with the liberty of the Press was that during the debate on the Address, no responsible Member had got up in his place and asserted that the statement was true; for if such a charge could be made and sustained against a Minister, it was one of the most formidable that could be advanced. How does the hon. Member attempt to fill up the gap left by the Home Rule orators who spoke in the debate on the Address? He stated that certain persons had been put in prison for publishing notices of prohibited meetings. Does the hon. Member know what the freedom of the Press really means? The liberty of the Press in this country is the right which enables a person to publish what opinions he likes, and defend them by such arguments as he hopes may influence the minds of others. That is the liberty of the Press, and that is a liberty which the Government has never interfered with in Ireland. We thought, in order to carry out the action of the Executive with regard to suppressed branches in a proclaimed district, it was necessary to prosecute certain gentlemen connected with Irish newspapers. We did so, and I am sorry if hon. Gentlemen should have been put to any suffering or inconvenience; but I am bound to say that these prosecutions have had the most salutary effect, and have carried out the object for which the Government initiated them. The hon. Gentleman went on to state that the League which was flourishing all over Ireland, was most flourishing in the proclaimed districts, and that meetings were being published in defiance of the law by various newspapers. But the Press prosecutions were instituted for a

particular object—the effectual suppression of the League in these districts which we had proclaimed—and so long as that object is attained, we are not concerned with anything else. That object is thoroughly attained. The hon. Gentleman appeared to think there was a division of opinion between me and Colonel Turner on this subject. As a matter of fact, my information on this subject is chiefly derived from correspondence with Colonel Turner. The League may practically be said to be a thing of the past over Clare and those parts of Cork in which the branches have been suppressed. [“Oh, oh!”] I am perfectly aware that we do see bogus reports of imaginary meetings reported in the Nationalist Press; but we know—it is not a question of conjecture, but a question of fact—that those reports are absolutely written out by the ex-secretary of the branch in his own private room, sent to the newspapers, and then published as indicating what is going on. But, considering that the names of the gentlemen taking part in the meeting are known to the police, and that their movements are watched on the day the meetings are said to have taken place, it is not a matter of conjecture, but a matter of demonstration that the report of the meeting has no more foundation in fact than the majority of the statements which appear in the Irish Press. But not only are the reports of these meetings purely imaginary, but even the imaginary reports have altered in their tone. That is a circumstance which should prove interesting to hon. Gentlemen who are curious to watch the development of affairs in Ireland since last August. I do not know whether the House recollects that it was my duty, when certain districts were to be proclaimed, to prove that the National League was a dangerous association, by reading out a large number of reports of meetings of the branches from different parts of the country inserted in different newspapers which were of an intimidatory character, and which mentioned by name obnoxious individuals who were subject to the tyrannical action of the League. The House, or that portion of the House which is interested in the maintenance of law and order, will be glad to learn that that form of report has almost entirely disappeared from the Irish Press. The result of our

action has been to enormously improve the character of the reports of those meetings, whether reports of meetings in suppressed districts or real meetings in other districts. It has tended largely to remove from them the stain of being the instruments of intimidation directed against special individuals. That is a satisfactory sign of the improved condition of the country. Then the hon. Gentleman went on to denounce as a peculiarly atrocious example of the action of the Government the proclamation of the meeting at Youghal on Sunday. The hon. Gentleman entered a good deal into the condition of Mr. Ponsonby's property; and, oddly enough, though he dealt at great length with that matter, not a single word fell from him which would have given anyone to understand, who was not already acquainted with the facts, that the Plan of Campaign has been practised on that estate for nearly two years. The hon. Member spoke of the strained relations existing between landlord and tenant; but he did not give any indication that the tenants on the Ponsonby estate—an estate managed with great liberality, judgment, and generosity—had been deliberately engaged in an illegal conspiracy against the landlord for nearly two years, during which time they had not paid 1s. of rent. The meeting was thus called on an estate in which the Plan of Campaign was in force, and by the man who, of all others, had made himself notorious in connection with the Plan of Campaign. Perhaps the House is not aware that the hon. Member for North-East Cork has not been seen for the first time on this occasion on the Ponsonby estate. They are not perhaps aware that the hon. Member, who, I think, told us in a speech that only on one occasion did he counsel resistance on the part of the tenants to the law, did counsel the tenants on the Ponsonby estate to resist by violence the process of the law, and advised them to take as an example for their conduct the notorious instance of Saunders' Fort—one of the most flagrant cases of deliberate and protracted resistance to the Sheriff and his officers which even the recent history of Ireland can furnish. I apprehend, when the House takes these facts into account, it will probably entertain no doubt that the Executive would have been failing in its duty

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had it omitted to prohibit this meeting from being held, and to disperse it if an attempt had been made to hold it in defiance of the proclamation. What is the avowed excuse given for the meeting? It is to protest, as far as I understand it, against the action of the landlord in preventing his tenants coming into Court to have a fair rent fixed. I wish the hon. Gentleman, when discussing this question, had explained to the House by what legal process it was possible for the landlord to prevent his tenants going into Court. [AN IRISH MEMBER: By eviction notice.] If a tenant is turned into a caretaker it is no doubt true that he loses the privileges conferred by the Act of 1881, which are only given to tenants. But there are certain preliminary stages to be gone through before a tenant is turned into a caretaker. The hon. Gentleman led us to believe that the tenants in question had been leaseholders.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Some of them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think they were not; but it is not material. Whether leaseholders or tenants from year to year, no action that the landlord could possibly take would deprive them of the right of going into Court and having a fair rent fixed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): What is the effect of arrears in that case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Arrears are not the point in question. The hon. Gentleman has raised a different issue. It is not pretended that on account of accumulation of arrears, the tenants were prevented from going into Court. The accusation is that they were turned into caretakers, and, consequently, precluded from going into Court. With regard to arrears, I will point out that those people, had they thought themselves aggrieved, at any stage of the preliminary proceedings, would have had the power not only of going into Court to have a fair rent fixed, but of asking the County Court Judge to give a stay of execution on the proceedings to evict them until a fair rent had been fixed for them by the action of the Court, and no action of the landlord could deprive them of the power of going into Court. Is there any evidence that this request for stay of execution was made, or that the request was refused? If there is not, does it not show

that they had no case? The hon. Gentleman next says that the proclamation of the meeting came too late. But I gather that, however late the proclamation may have been, it gave ample time to the hon. Member for North-East Cork to make a written communication to Captain Plunkett respecting it. If that hon. Member had obeyed the proclamation, he could have prevented a not very creditable scene which, in consequence of his resistance, took place on Sunday. The hon. Gentleman also raked up the incorrect and oft exploded version of the telegram sent by Captain Plunkett with regard to the riots at Youghal. The hon. Member interpolated a sarcasm to the effect that that telegram had done a great deal to cause the Conservative Party to lose so many bye-elections. We have not lost so many bye-elections after all; but I will not go into that point. I would, however, ask the hon. Member, if it be granted that this telegram produced such an effect on constituencies in England, whether it was a true description of what the telegram was and of the circumstances under which it was issued that produced that effect, or was it the utterly incorrect and imaginative version which the hon. Gentleman gave of it in this House, and which I know was repeated in newspapers and on platforms in order to inflame the public mind against one of the most honourable, most distinguished, and most courageous public servants that the Government of the country possesses? ["Oh, oh!"] No man in this world is more anxious than Captain Plunkett to prevent the shedding of blood. ["No, no!" from the Home Rule Members.] But Captain Plunkett is aware, as every other man who has ever been responsible for this kind of transaction is aware, that the first condition of maintaining peace and averting the effusion of blood is to say that in case of absolute necessity violence will be resisted by violence. And I have more than once before pointed out to the House that the result of this telegram was, that a mob which might have become dangerous both to themselves and to the police, were managed and dispersed without any bloodshed or destruction of life. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members interrupt me apparently under the impression that the loss of life at Youghal was due to the telegram. But even in Ireland the effect cannot precede the

cause. And unless my memory deceives me, the unfortunate man Hanlon was shot before the telegram was sent by Captain Plunkett; and I think that will not be contradicted now that I have given hon. Gentlemen an opportunity of recollecting the facts of the case. I think I have now dealt at as much length as the case deserves with all the circumstances of the proclamation of the meeting at Youghal. I have shown that we were well advised in proclaiming the meeting. I have shown that the circumstances of the Ponsonby estate made the meeting illegal. I have shown also, in my observations with regard to the influence of the National League generally and to its suppression in the proclaimed districts, that no man either in this country or in Ireland who is really anxious for the maintenance of law and order can be otherwise than satisfied with the course which the Government have taken or the policy which they have found it necessary to pursue.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, he did not desire to take part in the debate which had been going on, as he believed the Question Mr. Speaker had put before the House was a much more interesting one—namely, “That this House do on its rising adjourn until April 5th;” but the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had made a statement soon after that Question was proposed, against which he (Sir Joseph Pease) desired to put in a *caveat*. The right hon. Gentleman was so sanguine as to imagine that the Local Government Bill would be brought up for second reading on Thursday, and that the second reading debate would terminate on Friday. He (Sir Joseph Pease) thought it would be paying a poor compliment to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) if a Bill of such a complicated character, and with which the right hon. Gentleman had taken such great pains, were passed over in such a slighting manner. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to say whether, on reflection, he really thought that the Bill could be debated on second reading in the course of two nights? It contained questions which would rouse all their temperance Friends in the House and the country Gentlemen, and it would raise questions as to local

divisions and local government. Whilst they all desired to get into Committee on the Bill and to make progress with it as fast as they reasonably could, the sentiments of those Members of the House who would be likely to desire to speak could hardly be expressed, even if those Members exercised the greatest restraint over their loquacity, in two nights. He merely wished, as he had said, on the part of many Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, to enter a *caveat* against the too sanguine estimate of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman rose, he wished to say that when they suggested that the time proposed by the right hon. Gentleman was too short, they did not mean that the time allowed between the introduction of the Local Government Bill and the second reading was too short, but that the second reading debate would be prolonged beyond the two days he had estimated. No doubt, they would be glad on all sides if two nights were found to suffice. He (Mr. Mundella) rose to ask when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take the second reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill; because, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, until they had had the discussion on the second reading the Grand Committee could not commence its labours?

MR. W. H. SMITH: There is no desire on the part of the Government to unduly press forward the Local Government Bill; but, inasmuch as the general principle of the measure has been practically accepted with almost practical unanimity, although there are points and details which may properly be raised for discussion at length in Committee, I should hope that we shall be able to take the second reading in two nights' debate. With regard to the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, I will endeavour to make some arrangement for getting it read a second time as shortly after Easter as is practicable. The measure, it will be recollected, has passed through the House of Lords; and, therefore, the same pressure does not exist with respect to it as applies to the case of some other Bills. Sir, I think I may now venture to appeal to the House to come to a decision on the question of the Motion I have proposed

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to the House, as there are several Notices of Motion on the Paper, and hon. Members will be put to great inconvenience. To prevent that inconvenience, I will claim to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Why do not you let us answer the Chief Secretary's speech?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. W. REDMOND: You are afraid to be answered.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member persists in these unseemly interruptions, I shall have to take strong measures.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): You are cowards.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes 145; Noes 51: Majority 94.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Question, "That this House, at its rising, do adjourn till Thursday, 5th April," put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock till Thursday 5th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—David Randell, esquire, for the County of Glamorgan (Western or Gower Division).

SUPPLY—considered in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES ESTIMATES; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 1 to 6, 8 to 13.

PUBLIC BILLS—Committee—Report—Copyright (Musical Compositions) * [156].

Referred to Standing Committee on Law, &c.—County Courts Consolidation * [173].

Withdrawn—Metropolis Local Government * [14].

IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER (MR. GILHOOLY).

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the Imprisonment of a Member of this House:—

Macroom, Co. Cork, Ireland,
31st March, 1888.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. J. Gilhooly, M.P., has been sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment without H.L., commencing

on the 30th March, 1888, under the Prevention of Crime Act, 1871, 34 & 35 Vict. chap. 112, sect. 12, for an assault committed on a County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

H. CADDELL, Lt. Col.,

Resident Magistrate,

Co. Cork.

To the Right Honble.

The Speaker, the House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

MOROCCO—DISPUTE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the expediency of offering their mediation in the dispute between the American Representative at Tangier and the Sultan of Morocco?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have not offered their mediation in the differences which have arisen between the United States Consul at Tangier and the Moorish Government. Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco has done what he could with propriety to bring about an accommodation, but without success at present; and the case in question is understood to have been referred by the Consul to the Government of the United States.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY MEDICAL STAFF—ROYAL WARRANT OF 1879.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Royal Warrant of November, 1879, which gave officers of the Army Medical Staff the right to retire after 20 years' service, is about to be interfered with or set aside; whether the condition of retirement was intended as an inducement to medical men to enter the Service; and, whether this provision under the said Warrant, if interfered with, will affect the retirement of those medical officers who entered the Service since the Warrant was issued?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): This Question has been on the Paper for four days, and, perhaps, I may be

allowed to answer it. It is not intended to prevent medical officers from retiring after 20 years' service; but it is proposed to require a reasonable service in a given rank before allowing retirement on the rates permitted for that rank. The power of retiring after 20 years' service was, undoubtedly, held out as an inducement to candidates to come forward; and, as regards that retirement on £1 a-day, no restriction will be placed upon it. The last paragraph of the Question touches on vested rights. These, as in all other branches of the Service, must be regarded as governed by the Rule enunciated by Lord Penzance's Royal Commission in 1876, that an officer's rights are limited to the rank he holds; and this Rule is embodied in the Preamble to the Royal Warrant.

PRISONS—CONVICT PRISON AT DOVER.

MAJOR DICKSON (Dover) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the convict prison at Dover is now ready and occupied, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the harbour of refuge, the convict station having been established at Dover for that purpose?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ask Parliament this Session to make provision for the commencement of a harbour of refuge at Dover.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL—REVISION OF VALUATION.

MR. OHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that, if not premature, he should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the revision of valuation would be dealt with as a separate Bill apart from the Local Government Bill; and, if so, whether the Government would be prepared to introduce a Bill for the revision of valuation, and to put it on a more simple basis during the present Session?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, it was usual to give Notice of the kind of Question asked by the hon. Member; but probably he was unacquainted with the practice. It was not possible for him to give any undertaking of the kind.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) inquired, Whether, if Classes I. and II. of the Civil Service Estimates were finished that night, the Government would go on with Class III. to-morrow?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Certainly, Sir; if we are so fortunate as to get through Classes I. and II. to-night, we shall proceed with Class III. to-morrow.

MEMORANDUM
OF
THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY
RELATING TO THE
CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1888-89.

(PRESENTED BY HER MAJESTY'S COMMAND.)

ABSTRACT OF ESTIMATES OF CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Civil Services.

	1888-89.	1887-88. (Grants in Session of 1887.)	Increase.	Decrease.	CASH EXTRA RECEIPTS.	
					1888-89.	1887-88.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Class I.—WORKS AND BUILDINGS	1,723,338	2,005,942	—	282,604	43,943	43,563
Class II.—SALARIES, &c., OF PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS	2,427,208	2,469,663	—	42,455	312,887	320,942
Class III.—LAW AND JUSTICE	6,307,530	6,303,055	4,475	—	718,146	725,552
Class IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ART	5,738,044	5,574,178	163,866	—	61,200	62,230
Class V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL	616,868	617,350	—	482	12,950	13,820
Class VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE ..	1,259,778	1,248,116	11,662	—	50	50
Class VII.—MISCELLANEOUS ..	72,527	121,578	—	49,051	2,000	2,200
	£18,145,293	18,339,882	180,003	374,592	1,151,176	1,168,357

Not Decrease £194,589

Cash Extra
Receipts, } £17,181
Decrease }

Revenue Departments.

	1888-89.	1887-88. (Grants in Session of 1887.)	Increase.	Decrease.	CASH EXTRA RECEIPTS.	
					1888-89.	1887-88.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
CUSTOMS	937,920	951,848	—	13,928	46,398	46,098
INLAND REVENUE	1,807,629	1,763,879	43,750	—	29,000	25,000
POST OFFICE	5,666,666	5,420,770	245,896	—	364,518	295,464
POST OFFICE PACKET SERVICE	641,500	699,341	—	57,841	—*	103,760
POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS ..	2,036,836	1,950,248	86,588	—	12,410	11,410
	£11,090,551	10,786,086	376,234	71,769	452,326	481,732
Net Increase			£304,465		Cash Extra Receipts, Decrease } £29,406	

* Now taken in aid of the Vote.

MEMORANDUM.*Civil Services.*

THE services for which provision is made in the Civil Service Estimates may be roughly divided into two large groups.

(1.) The first group comprises those services which, having been once established by Act of Parliament, or otherwise, grow, as a rule, in cost year after year, under the influence of increasing population or the automatic effect of regulations laid down for their administration. The growth of such services is independent of any action of the Government so long as the regulations under which they are administered remain unaltered; and any alteration which has been made in the last 20 years has generally been on the side of augmentation. The control exercised by the Government over the Estimates for these services is, in fact, limited to satisfying themselves that sufficient, and not more than sufficient, provision is made for them according to the best means available for calculating expenditure, which must, at best, be somewhat uncertain. In 1868-69 the total of such services did not much exceed £2,340,000; in the current year they amount to at least £8,830,000, an increase of £6,490,000, of which above £2,000,000 has been added from time to time by fresh grants in relief of local rates, but the rest is due to automatic growth.

The principal items of this class in the current and the ensuing year are as follows:—

	1888-89.	1887-88.	1888-89.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Rates on Government Property, Contributions in lieu of.	228,848	226,105	2,743	—
Roads, Contributions to	295,000	*571,500	—	276,500
Poor Laws, Grants in Aid under	369,690	369,910	—	220
Criminal Prosecutions, Repayments to Counties and Boroughs.	138,000	135,000	3,000	—
County Courts, Remuneration of Registrars and High Bailiffs.	370,570	343,635	26,935	—
Metropolitan Police Fund, Contribution to ..	579,220	571,320	7,900	—
Police, County and Borough, Great Britain, Contribution to Charge of.	1,023,200	1,005,500	700	—
Reformatories and Industrial Schools, Allowance for Inmates of.	380,063	380,082	—	19
Education, Science and Art, Payments by Results.	4,652,187	4,493,985	158,202	—
Pauper Lunatics, Allowance for	687,460	681,300	6,160	—
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency.	60,013	51,259	8,754	—
Total £	8,784,251	8,829,596	231,394	276,739
			Decrease .. £45,345	

* The rate of contribution was doubled for this year only.

To understand correctly the significance of the relative expenditure provided for in the two years, the temporary increase of the Road Grants in the year 1887-88 should be excluded from the comparison, when it will be seen that the automatic increase which has to be provided for in 1888-89 amounts to £231,155.

(2.) The second group comprises those services over which, except so far as they are affected by the exigencies of business, the Government may be regarded as exercising effective control. The amounts which come under this group are as follows:—

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Class I.—Works and Buildings ...	1,199,490	1,208,337	—	8,847
Class II.—Civil Departments	2,057,618	2,099,753	—	42,235
Class III.—Law and Justice	3,816,477	3,867,518	—	51,041
Class IV.—Education, Science and Art	1,086,857	1,080,193	5,664	—
Class V.—Foreign and Colonial ..	616,868	617,350	—	482
Class VI.—Non-Effective	512,305	515,557	—	3,252
Class VII.—Miscellaneous	72,527	121,578	—	49,051
£	9,361,042	9,510,286	5,664	154,908
Net Decrease £149,244				

There is thus a reduction of £149,244 in the provision made next year for those services over which control is retained in the hands of the Government.

Another correction should, however, be made before proceeding to analyze this reduction. The term of the Irish Land Commission expires, under the Act 44 & 45 Vict. c. 49, upon the 22nd August next, and consequently, pending its extension by Parliament, provision has only been made in the Estimates for expenditure up to that date. If full provision had been made a further sum of £54,116 would have had to be included in the Estimates; and if this sum be taken into account in anticipation of the renewal of the term of the Commission, the effective reduction of those Estimates which are under the control of the Government as compared with those of the current year would be £94,426.

The principal fluctuations which have produced this result are as follows:—

CLASS I.

WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,005,942
„ 1888-89	1,723,338
Decrease	282,604
Deduct,—Decrease of Automatic Services . .	273,757
Decrease of other Services	£8,847

—	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	CAUSE.
	£	£	£	£	
Royal Parks	89,013	101,430	—	12,417	Transfer of Battersea, Victoria and Kennington Parks to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Total amount transferred about £18,000 a-year, of which about £6,500 taken off Estimate of current year, and remainder next year.
	• •	• •	• •	• •	
	• •	• •	• •	• •	
Houses of Parliament	46,940	55,635	—	8,695	Less required for restoration of Westminster Hall and new drainage works.
	• •	• •			
Public Buildings ..	130,629	142,255	—	11,626	Completion of New National Gallery, transfer of Westminster Bridge to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and reduction in cost of maintenance of buildings.
Revenue Department Buildings	238,514	208,627	29,887	—	New Buildings for Postal and Telegraph Service.
Metropolitan Police Courts	15,756	6,737	9,019	—	On account for New Court at Dalston and improvements at Hammersmith.
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin	42,500	30,000	12,500	—	Greater progress will be made by the buildings next year.

The increased amount required for Revenue Department Buildings is due to the very extensive additions which are now required for Postal and Telegraph accommodation to keep pace with the growth of business, especially as regards the Parcels Post, all over the United Kingdom: £114,000 is provided next year for the extension of buildings, which will require a further sum of £308,000 to complete them in future years; and a sum of £185,000 is also placed on the Post Office and Telegraph Estimates for the Purchase of sites and buildings.

Expenditure upon Prison Buildings is provided in the Estimates for the various Prison Departments.

Considerable sums have of recent years been expended in sanitary works, and although the heavier part of the cost has now been defrayed, above £8,000 is included in next year's Votes for this purpose in various Public Offices in London.

Upon the whole, the expenditure of a capital nature (as distinguished from the charges of maintenance) upon building operations proposed by the Government for next year in connection with the Civil and Revenue Departments amounts to £615,983, and in the current year to £573,321.

CLASS II.

CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,469,663
„ 1888-89	2,427,208
„ Decrease	42,455
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services	220
Decrease of other Services	£42,235

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Privy Council Office..	51,356	46,321	5,035	—	Grant in aid of Dairy and Agricultural Education.
Board of Trade ..	104,017	108,107	—	4,090	Preliminary reduction on account of reorganisation of Office of Seamen's Registry.
Civil Service Commission.	44,477	40,531	3,946	—	Increased amount of bonuses for copyists.
Land Commission for England.	12,210	24,797	—	12,587	The proceedings under the Tithe Redemption Act of last Session are approaching completion.
Stationery and Printing.	545,977	556,303	—	10,326	More favourable contracts recently arranged for printing for Parliament and Public Departments.
Secret Service	40,000	50,000	—	10,000	
Public Works Office, Ireland.	41,728	47,751	—	6,023	Reduction of staff required for inspecting works carried out by loans under Land Acts.

The sum required for the Service of the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade is £3,637 greater than in the current year, chiefly owing to the increased business. But the increased expenditure being covered by increased fees, which are taken in aid of the Vote, no increase appears in the Grant.

CLASS III.

LAW CHARGES.

	£
Total 1887-88	6,303,055
„ 1888-89	6,307,530
„ Increase	4,475
Increase of Automatic Services	55,516
Decrease of other Services	£51,041

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Charges, Eng- i.	77,776	82,576	—	4,800	Diminished expenditure anticipated on criminal prosecutions.
Courts, London Sheerness.	17,743	15,689	2,054	—	Staff for new court at Dalston.
Police	57,000	37,000	20,000	—	Contribution towards expense of Police guarding outside of Public Buildings.
Prisons, England and Colonies.	721,180	758,018	—	36,838	Diminished number of Prisoners ; closing and amalgamation of prisons ; lower price of supplies.
Prison Court Officers, and.	112,750	100,854	11,896	—	Remuneration of valuers attending courts under Land Act of Last Session ; additional magistrate.
Irish Constabulary.	1,439,288	1,412,315	26,973	—	Increased pay by length of service ; periodical clothing ; additional travelling and pensions ; no increase of numbers.
Land Commis- sioners, Ireland ..	45,912	100,028	—	54,116	Explained above (page 461).
	134,742	143,050	—	8,308	Diminished number of prisoners ; closing of prisons.

Reductions exceeding in the aggregate £5,000 a-year have been effected by organisation of various legal Departments in England and Ireland during the past year.

CLASS IV.

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

	£
Total 1887-88	5,574,178
„ 1888-89	5,738,044
„ Increase	163,866
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services	158,202
Increase of other Services	£5,664

The principal charges in this class come under the head of “Automatic.” Other variations are few and unimportant, but the Purchase Grants of the British Museum and Natural History Museum have been augmented by £5,000; and £1,721 (the balance of a special grant of £2,000) has been provided for the National Gallery for the purchase of pictures, the ordinary grant having been temporarily suspended in consequence of the large sum expended in the purchase of the Blenheim pictures. The total of the sums borne upon the Estimates of the ensuing year on account of purchases for the various museums and galleries amounts to £39,759. In the current year, £36,500 is provided.

CLASS V.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL.

	£
Total 1887-88	617,350
„ 1888-89	61,868
Decrease	£482

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Consular Services ..	179,433	181,125	—	4,692	Some consularships abolished and increased fees taken in aid of the Vote.
Slave Trade Services	13,120	16,400	—	3,280	Diminution in bounties payable on captured slavers.
Colonies, Grants-in-Aid.	51,115	26,416	24,699	—	Purchase of steamer for New Guinea Government, £18,500; maintenance, £3,500, under agreement at Colonial Conference.
South Africa and St. Helena.	56,235	86,180	—	29,945	Reduced cost of administration of Bechuanaland.
Cyprus, Grant-in-Aid	30,000	18,000	12,000	—	Deficient revenue owing to severe drought.

CLASS VI.

NON-EFFECTIVE.

	£
Total 1887-88	1,248,116
„ 1888-89	1,259,778
„ Increase	11,662
Increase of Automatic Services	14,914
Decrease of Other Services	£3,252

The decrease of this class is due to the excess of Pensions ceased over those granted in the year.

CLASS VII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

	£.
Total 1887-88	121,578
„ 1888-89	72,527
Decrease	£49,051

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Incr ease.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Public Works and Industries, Ireland	26,000	50,000	—	24,000	Partly a re-vote of the Special Grant which will not all be spent in the Current Year.
Adelaide Exhibition	—	2,650	—	} 25,719	
Celebration of the Jubilee.	—	17,000	—		
Repayments to Civil Contingencies Fund	—	6,069	—		

(3.) Some improvements have been made this Session in the arrangement of the Civil Estimates, principally in the description of Sub-heads, in order to secure greater uniformity of grouping similar services in different Votes. This has involved some transfer of items, but not of sufficient consequence to notice in detail. Notes have also been added to every Vote, showing the amounts provided in other Votes, or charged on the Consolidated Fund, in connection with the same service. By this arrangement the total estimated charge of each service can now be ascertained.

The principle of appropriation of Extra Receipts in aid of the Votes which have been for some years adopted in the case of the Army and Navy Estimates,

has only, as yet, been adopted to a limited extent in the Civil Service Estimates. But in some special cases, such as when a new service is placed upon the Votes by Act of Parliament, and provision is, at the same time, made by the Act for repayment of the expenses of administration by fees or otherwise, the receipts are then taken in aid of the Vote. The expenses incurred under the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act of last Session, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts and others, have been dealt with in this manner; also the contributions of India and the Colonies to the cost of the Packet Service.

Revenue Departments.

(4.) The Estimates for the Customs and Inland Revenue necessarily depend rather upon the nature than upon the amount of the Revenue to be collected. They have been in course of reduction for several years. Those of the Post Office may be expected to steadily grow as the business increases.

CUSTOMS.

The effective charge of the Customs Service has fallen from £855,077 in 1882-83 to £739,645 in 1888-89, a decrease of £115,432. During the reorganisation by which this has chiefly been effected, the non-effective charge in the same period has been raised from £155,078 to £198,275, an increase of £43,197, part of which however is due to pensioners over 60 years of age who had already earned their retirement. The immediate net reduction of charge has therefore been £72,235, which will be increased as the non-effective charges fall in. A considerable saving has been effected by the reduction of many separate bonding warehouses and their amalgamation with Inland Revenue Establishments, but large reductions have also been made by more economical methods of administration.*

The decrease of £13,928 in the charge for next year is almost entirely due to reductions of establishment.

INLAND REVENUE.

The Inland Revenue requires for its service in the ensuing year £43,750 more than in the current year. But the whole of this increase is due to the intermittent charge of the triennial valuation of property under Schedules A and B of the Income Tax outside the metropolitan area, which usually brings in additional tax to the extent of £80,000 to £100,000 a-year. The total of the temporary addition from this cause is £44,100, so that the permanent charge is in fact less than that of the current year. A fairer idea of the relative expense of the Department is gained by comparing the charge of 1885-86, the last year of triennial valuation. In that year the total charge was £1,823,157, or £15,528 more than in the ensuing year. The lessened charge of the ensuing year includes £234,044 for Pensions against £212,653 in 1885-86, so that the reduction

* CUSTOMS.				† INLAND REVENUE.			
—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.	—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.
	£	£	£		£	£	£
1882-83	855,077	155,078	1,010,155	1882-83	1,587,937	212,685	1,800,622
1883-84	838,830	167,955	1,006,785		(Triennial Valuation)		
1884-85	810,240	176,711	986,951	1883-84	1,557,772	210,594	1,768,366
1885-86	796,125	181,608	977,733	1884-85	1,551,396	210,619	1,762,015
1886-87	772,010	184,047	956,067	1885-86	1,610,504	212,653	1,823,157
1887-88	756,020	197,228	953,248		(Triennial Valuation)		
1888-89	739,645	198,275	937,920	1886-87	1,583,227	214,279	1,797,506
				1887-88	1,549,704	214,176	1,763,878
				1888-89	1,573,585	234,044	1,807,629

of effective charge is above £36,000 a-year. This increased pension charge has all been added in the current year, in which extensive reorganisations have taken place, including the adoption of the working day of seven hours; by which the effective staff has been reduced upwards of 200 in number and £18,407 in cost. A large part of the resulting non-effective charge (£13,807) is in this case also paid to pensioners over 60 years of age who have already earned their retirement.

POST OFFICE AND TELEGRAPHS.

The combined Estimates of £7,703,502 for the Post Office and Telegraph Services (exclusive of the Packet Service), are swollen by the large provision of £185,000 for purchase of sites to meet the great extension of buildings required by the development of business, especially that of the Parcels Post, all over the country. Excluding the charge for sites in both years the increased working expenses of the two services for the ensuing year amount to £327,484, of which the ordinary increment of salaries and the pay of additional staff have alone added in London £93,865, and in the provinces £168,642, the remainder being entirely due to the growth of business.

PACKET SERVICE.

The contracts for the Eastern, Australian, and West Indian Mail Services, though made by the Postmaster General, are in effect joint undertakings of the Imperial and Indian and Colonial Post Offices. The addition to the Estimates for 1888-9 of a charge of £170,000 for the Australian Service has afforded the opportunity of taking the Indian and Colonial contributions as Appropriations-in-Aid of the Vote. The necessity will thus be avoided of unnecessarily swelling both Expenditure and Revenue, and of asking Parliament to vote a gross sum, of which a large proportion would afterwards be paid to the Exchequer as Extra Receipts.

Treasury Chambers,)
9 March 1888. }

W. L. JACKSON.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £29,260, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that this Vote might be divided into three heads—namely, palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty; secondly, palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty; and, thirdly, palaces which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He had given Notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote by the sum of £500 as a protest against the system of expenditure upon palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He did not complain of Hampton Court Palace, which might be considered a people's palace, but there was an item in the Vote against which he did protest for Hampton Court Stud-house. He had never yet been able to discover what on earth Hampton Court Stud-house was. He understood that a certain number of cream-coloured horses were bred there; but he did not know what became of them, although the country had to pay £400 per annum for the maintenance and repair of Hampton Court Stud-house, and £15 for furniture. Then, again, there was a palace at Kew Green. He had had great difficulty in finding where that palace was at Kew, and he did not think there were half-a-dozen Gentlemen in the House who had the slightest idea where it was, or who lived there. Nevertheless, £556 appeared in the Vote as a charge for its maintenance and repair, together with £20 for furniture and £156 for fuel. There were a number of other houses which were called palaces, but which were not palaces in the sense of ever

being occupied by the Sovereign. One of them was a house which was lent to one of the French ex-Royal Dukes, and its maintenance and repair cost about £600. In addition, there was an item for money expended in furniture. If it was neither desirable to let these houses or pull them down, those who occupied them ought certainly to maintain them and keep them in repair, and not come upon the nation for furniture. He would, therefore, move the reduction of the vote by the sum of £500, having reference to the items for Hampton Court Stud-house, Kew Gardens, and the other buildings he had mentioned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,760, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Labouchere.)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, this was not the first time he had had the pleasure of replying to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on the question of the maintenance of the Royal Palaces, and he was afraid that he could not add anything to the information he had already given on several previous occasions, and which had always been considered satisfactory by the House. The fact was that in former times the expense of maintaining and furnishing the Royal Palaces always fell upon the Civil List. From time to time that Civil List, as the hon. Member knew very well, had been very much reduced. In 1831 it was reduced by the sum of £547,000 per annum, and in 1838, on the accession of Her Majesty, it was further reduced by the sum of £215,000 per annum. When those arrangements were made the country undertook to pay the expense of maintaining and furnishing these Royal Palaces. That was part of the bargain made on that occasion on behalf of the country with the Sovereign for the time being. He could not, therefore, understand how the hon. Member, or any other hon. Member, should dispute the way in which the bargain was carried out, or propose to set it aside. There might be hon. Members who thought that at some future accession to the Throne the Civil List might be still further reduced; but he could not understand how they could desire to break down a bargain which

had been deliberately entered into at the beginning of the present reign, and he could not think that the hon. Member seriously proposed that such a thing should be done. In regard to particular points which had been raised by the hon. Member, he must say that there was no difference whatever in principle in the carrying out of the bargain between the palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty and those which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. The principle was the same all through. The country had chosen to take off from the Civil List the charge of maintaining these palaces, and certain sums were put on the Estimates from year to year for the purpose of honestly carrying out the bargain which had been made. As to the particular instance referred to by the hon. Member—namely, Hampton Court Stud-house, that house was attached to Hampton Court Palace and occupied by the Crown Equerries. The stables attached to them were used for the purpose of producing certain kind of horses. The hon. Member would like to know what became of the horses. He (Mr. Plunket) was not bound to know. [*Cries of "Oh!"*] Certainly not; but, as a matter of fact, the horses were used for the purpose of horsing Royal carriages. The hon. Member for Northampton said the horses were of a cream colour. Very likely that might be the colour that might be required. Personally, he knew nothing about it, nor did he know whether the hon. Member had a preference for that colour or not. As to the palace at Kew Gardens, it was preserved by the nation, and if the hon. Member had really any serious curiosity on the subject he might easily see it. All these houses were Royal Palaces which Her Majesty had inherited, and which used to be maintained out of the Civil List. They were now, by the agreement entered into with Her Majesty, maintained by the taxpayers of the country and fell upon the Estimates. He could give no precise reply to the question of the hon. Member as to who were the inhabitants of these palaces, inasmuch as they changed from year to year; nor was it any part of his duty to inquire who were in the occupation of them. He was afraid that he could not add more in the way of explanation, or give any further infor-

mation, than he had given in previous years. He could quite understand that at some future time, if the hon. Member thought a further economy could be effected by an alteration of the Civil List, he might make some proposal of a serious character on the subject. It would, however, be pressing the principle of economy too far to ask the House of Commons in the present day to set aside the bargain made by the Sovereign as regarded these Royal Palaces. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would not press his Motion for the reduction of the sum asked for in this respect.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he did not deny that the Civil List had been reduced. There had been numerous expenses thrown upon the Civil List formerly, such as the maintenance of the whole of the Diplomatic Service, the Judges, and so on, which items had never been removed from the list; but he protested against the pious theory of a bargain having been struck between Her Majesty and the nation with regard to the maintenance of these Royal Palaces. There was never any specific bargain between the Crown and the country. The Civil List at the commencement of the Reign was decided on after an exhaustive inquiry as to the expenditure of William IV., and it was upon that basis that the Civil List was established. It was perfectly true that various items on the Civil List were not put down as a charge to Her Majesty, and as a necessary consequence the cost of maintaining certain houses would necessarily fall upon the taxpayer if it was wished to keep them up; but many hon. Members who sat on that side of the House were of opinion that it was quite enough for the nation to bear the cost of maintaining the palaces actually occupied by the Sovereign without maintaining and tinkering up a lot of old houses in various parts of the country, which Her Majesty, instead of occupying herself, granted to certain people for their lives. Many hon. Members thought that it would be better and cheaper for the country to allow these buildings to go to rack and ruin rather than to spend the money of the taxpayers in repairing them, seeing that they were of no benefit to the country, but only to those who lived in them. At any rate, those who occupied them should have them on the

same terms as the man who took a house upon a repairing lease. He certainly did not agree with the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). The right hon. Gentleman had answered Questions put to him on this subject before, and had always fallen back on the stupidity of our ancestors in making a bad bargain with the Sovereign; but he (Mr. Labouchere) did not believe that our ancestors had been such fools as the right hon. Gentleman appeared to think, or that they had entered into such a bargain as that which the right hon. Gentleman suggested. If the right hon. Gentleman could not give a more satisfactory answer upon this subject than that which he had just given, he should feel compelled to divide the House upon the question of the reduction of the Vote, in order to put a stop to what appeared to him to be a reckless, wasteful, and useless expenditure.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he thought that the Committee ought to get at the bottom of this so-called bargain between the Sovereign and the country. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had mentioned the word "bargain" or "agreement" five or six times, and had spoken of it as a bargain which the House of Commons was bound to adhere to. If such a bargain had been entered into, it must have been embodied in some document, and he should like to know where that document was to be found? The contention of the right hon. Gentleman was that the Civil List Act was a contract between the Crown and the country. He (Mr. Robertson) altogether denied that. He denied that anything was contained in that Act with which Parliament might not interfere at any moment it chose. The right hon. Gentleman's theory went still further than that. He said that they were not only bound to respect the Civil List Act, but also payments which were made outside that Act. As the right hon. Gentleman maintained that there was an agreement between the Crown and the country, he called upon him to produce it, or to explain what its contents were and what it required the country to do. Unless the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee some more satisfactory answer in reference to this matter, he should feel bound

Mr. Labouchere

to support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) ought to give the Committee some information as to the uses to which these palaces were put. He did not go as far as his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) when he said that they ought not to keep up any palaces except those which were occupied by the Crown, because it was obvious that certain places were required for the exercise of hospitality. He, therefore, did not agree that all the palaces which were not in the actual occupation of the Sovereign should be pulled down. The right hon. Gentleman, however, seemed to put the matter on too high a ground. He implied that there was a distinct bargain and a schedule of palaces that were to be kept up. If that were so, and there was any specific bargain between the Sovereign and the country in existence, it ought to be produced; if there was no such bargain, it amounted simply to this—that by the Civil List, which was drawn up on behalf of Her Majesty on her accession to the Throne, the country undertook to keep up certain buildings for the purposes of Her Majesty. In that case, he thought it was incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) to tell the Committee what the purposes were for which these palaces were occupied. Take the case of Hampton Court Palace. He was bound to say that it was not inappropriate to provide apartments in that palace for the accommodation of the lady relatives of distinguished officers who had fallen in the service of their country. So far as Kew Palace was concerned, he (Sir George Campbell) had seen it through the railings, and it appeared to be a very mysterious place. It did not seem as if anybody ever inhabited it. It cut off part of the gardens, and gave an air of secrecy to the place.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) to say that the Committee had no right to refuse this Vote. In that case, what was the necessity of bringing it forward, and why was Parliament asked to pass it? He thought that the hon. Member for

Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had made out a very strong case, and he should have great pleasure in supporting by his vote the Amendment which had been moved for pulling down this extravagant expenditure.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he regretted that his explanation had not given satisfaction to the hon. Member. He thought it unnecessary to explain the matter more than he had done, but from no wish to give either a discourteous or unsatisfactory answer. The statement he had made was that at the time the Civil List was settled, at the beginning of the present reign, a bargain was entered into between the country and the Sovereign. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: Where?] It was a bargain entered into between the country and the Sovereign, that in consideration of certain large reductions which were made in the Civil List at that time the arrangement whereby certain expenses were borne by the Votes should be continued throughout the present Reign. That bargain was contained in successive Civil List Acts, and the particular Civil List Act which governed the present arrangement was the 1 & 2 Vict. (1837), c. 2. The 1st section of that Act recited the principle of the bargain to which he had referred, and the bargain was carried out throughout the rest of the Acts. The effect of the Act generally was that several reductions were made in the Civil List, and certain expenses connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown were to be borne by the sums voted by the taxpayers of the country. In consequence, among the matters connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown was included the maintenance of certain palaces, some of which were in the personal occupation of the Sovereign, some, like St. James's Palace, which were partly in the occupation of the Queen, and certain other palaces which were not in the personal occupation of Her Majesty at all.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked, if a list of them was contained in any Schedule?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he did not think they were contained in any Schedule attached to that or to any of the previous Acts. They were, however, the purposes which had always been included, and there was the same obligation under the Act to keep them up and maintain them. It would be un-

gracious to criticize the provisions of the Act; but it was, of course, open to the Committee to criticize its administration by the Office of Works, and to say that too much money was being expended in a particular direction. He could only say again, as he had already said, that if the Committee were to refuse to give effect to the policy of the Civil List Act, it would be in his opinion, and also he was sure in the opinion of the country, a departure from the bargain made, although, perhaps, not exactly in words, but in its sense, at the time when the Civil List was made between the country and the Sovereign. That arrangement had ever since been faithfully carried out, and he believed that it had been economically and faithfully carried out to the advantage of the ratepayers of the country. He hoped the explanation he had endeavoured to give of the policy of the Act on which the arrangement depended would be satisfactory.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman amounted to this—that Her Majesty gave up certain Crown lands, in return for which the taxpayers maintained the honour and dignity of the Crown. But they did not recognize the personal right of the Sovereign to the Crown lands. The right was first put forward in the time of George III. There was then a servile Minister, who put in the Preamble of the Civil List Act a statement that His Majesty gave up his right to the Crown lands during life. That statement had been repeated in the recital of succeeding Civil List Acts; but the fact that Her Majesty gave up her right to the Crown lands did not bestow any right of the kind on Her Majesty. If it amused a Minister of the Crown to put in an Act a statement that the Sovereign gave up certain rights which they denied she had, of course they could not make any objection; but, assuming that this bargain did exist, what did it amount to? It amounted to this—that on the side of the taxpayers they engaged as a *quid pro quo* for the Crown lands to maintain the honour and dignity of the Crown. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the Committee that the honour and dignity of the Crown depended upon furnishing and maintaining a house for an Equerry at Hampton Court, in order to look after a few cream-

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.
	£	£	£	£
Class I.—Works and Buildings ...	1,199,490	1,208,337	—	8,847
Class II.—Civil Departments	2,057,518	2,099,753	—	42,235
Class III.—Law and Justice	3,816,477	3,867,518	—	51,041
Class IV.—Education, Science and Art	1,085,857	1,080,193	5,664	—
Class V.—Foreign and Colonial ..	616,869	617,350	—	482
Class VI.—Non-Effective	512,305	515,557	—	3,252
Class VII.—Miscellaneous	72,527	121,578	—	49,051
£	9,361,042	9,510,286	5,664	154,908
Net Decrease £149,244				

There is thus a reduction of £149,244 in the provision made next year for those services over which control is retained in the hands of the Government.

Another correction should, however, be made before proceeding to analyze this reduction. The term of the Irish Land Commission expires, under the Act 44 & 45 Vict. c. 49, upon the 22nd August next, and consequently, pending its extension by Parliament, provision has only been made in the Estimates for expenditure up to that date. If full provision had been made a further sum of £54,116 would have had to be included in the Estimates; and if this sum be taken into account in anticipation of the renewal of the term of the Commission, the effective reduction of those Estimates which are under the control of the Government as compared with those of the current year would be £94,426.

The principal fluctuations which have produced this result are as follows:—

CLASS I.

WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,005,942
„ 1888-89	1,723,338
Decrease	282,604
Deduct,—Decrease of Automatic Services . . .	273,757
Decrease of other Services	£8,847

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	CAUSE.
	£	£	£	£	
Works	89,013	101,430	—	12,417	Transfer of Battersea, Victoria and Kennington Parks to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Total amount transferred about £18,000 a-year, of which about £6,500 taken off Estimate of current year, and remainder next year.
	
	
of Parliament	46,940	55,635	—	8,695	Less required for restoration of Westminster Hall and new drainage works.
	.	.			
Buildings ..	130,629	142,255	—	11,626	Completion of New National Gallery, transfer of Westminster Bridge to the Metropolitan Board of Works, and reduction in cost of maintenance of buildings.
Department	238,514	208,627	29,887	—	New Buildings for Postal and Telegraph Service.
Buildings					
Metropolitan Police	15,756	6,737	9,019	—	On account for New Court at Dalston and improvements at Hammersmith.
and Art Build- Dublin	42,500	30,000	12,500	—	Greater progress will be made by the buildings next year.

The increased amount required for Revenue Department Buildings is due to very extensive additions which are now required for Postal and Telegraph Station to keep pace with the growth of business, especially as regards the London Post, all over the United Kingdom: £114,000 is provided next year for extension of buildings, which will require a further sum of £308,000 to be met in future years; and a sum of £185,000 is also placed on the Civil and Telegraph Estimates for the Purchase of sites and buildings.

Expenditure upon Prison Buildings is provided in the Estimates for the Prison Departments.

Considerable sums have of recent years been expended in sanitary works, though the heavier part of the cost has now been defrayed, above £8,000 is provided in next year's Votes for this purpose in various Public Offices in London.

On the whole, the expenditure of a capital nature (as distinguished from expenses of maintenance) upon building operations proposed by the Government next year in connection with the Civil and Revenue Departments amounts to £615,983, and in the current year to £573,321.

CLASS II.

CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Total 1887-88	2,469,663
„ 1888-89	2,427,208
„ Decrease	42,455
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services	220
Decrease of other Services	£42,235

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Privy Council Office..	51,356	46,321	5,035	—	Grant in aid of Dairy and Agricultural Education.
Board of Trade ..	104,017	108,107	—	4,090	Preliminary reduction on account of reorganization of Office of Seamen's Registry.
Civil Service Commission.	44,477	40,531	3,946	—	Increased amount of bennues for copyists.
Land Commission for England.	12,210	24,797	—	12,587	The proceedings under the Tithe Redemption Act of last Session are approaching completion.
Stationery and Printing.	545,977	556,303	—	10,326	More favourable contracts recently arranged for printing for Parliament and Public Departments.
Secret Service	40,000	50,000	—	10,000	
Public Works Office, Ireland.	41,728	47,751	—	6,023	Reduction of staff required for inspecting works carried out by lease under Land Acts.

The sum required for the Service of the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade is £3,637 greater than in the current year, chiefly owing to the increased business. But the increased expenditure being covered by increased fees, which are taken in aid of the Vote, no increase appears in the Grant.

CLASS III.

LAW CHARGES.

	£
Total 1887-88	6,303,055
„ 1888-89	6,307,530
„ Increase	4,475
Increase of Automatic Services	55,516
Decrease of other Services	£51,041

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Charges, Eng- l.	77,776	82,576	—	4,800	Diminished expenditure anticipated on criminal prosecutions.
Courts, London Sheerness.	17,743	15,689	2,054	—	Staff for new court at Dalston.
Police	57,000	37,000	20,000	—	Contribution towards expense of Police guarding outside of Public Buildings.
s, England and Colonies.	721,180	758,018	—	36,838	Diminished number of Prisoners ; closing and amalgamation of prisons ; lower price of supplies.
7 Court Officers, und.	112,750	100,854	11,896	—	Remuneration of valuers attending courts under Land Act of Last Session ; additional magistrate.
Irish Consta- ry.	1,439,288	1,412,315	26,973	—	Increased pay by length of service ; periodical clothing ; additional travelling and pensions ; no increase of numbers.
Land Commis- s, Ireland ..	45,912	100,028	—	54,116	Explained above (page 461).
	134,742	143,050	—	8,308	Diminished number of prisoners ; closing of prisons.

Reductions exceeding in the aggregate £5,000 a-year have been effected by
 rationalisation of various legal Departments in England and Ireland during the
 last year.

CLASS IV.

EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

	£
Total 1887-88	5,574,178
„ 1888-89	5,738,014
„ Increase	163,866
Deduct,—Increase of Automatic Services	158,202
Increase of other Services	£5,664

The principal charges in this class come under the head of “Automatic.” Other variations are few and unimportant, but the Purchase Grants of the British Museum and Natural History Museum have been augmented by £5,000; and £1,721 (the balance of a special grant of £2,000) has been provided for the National Gallery for the purchase of pictures, the ordinary grant having been temporarily suspended in consequence of the large sum expended in the purchase of the Blenheim pictures. The total of the sums borne upon the Estimates of the ensuing year on account of purchases for the various museums and galleries amounts to £39,759. In the current year, £36,500 is provided.

CLASS V.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL.

	£
Total 1887-88	617,350
„ 1888-89	61,868
Decrease	£482

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Increase.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Consular Services ..	179,433	184,125	—	4,692	Some consularships abolished and increased fees taken in aid of the Vote.
Slave Trade Services	13,120	16,400	—	3,280	Diminution in bounties payable on captured slaves.
Colonies, Grants-in-Aid.	51,115	26,416	24,699	—	Purchase of steamer for New Guinea Government, £18,500; maintenance, £3,500, under agreement at Colonial Conference.
South Africa and St. Helena.	56,235	86,180	—	29,945	Reduced cost of administration of Bechuanaland.
Cyprus, Grant-in-Aid	30,000	18,000	12,000	—	Deficient revenue owing to severe drought.

CLASS VI.

NON-EFFECTIVE.

		£
Total 1887-88		1,248,116
„ 1888-89		1,259,778
„ Increase		11,662
Increase of Automatic Services		14,914
Decrease of Other Services		£3,252

The decrease of this class is due to the excess of Pensions ceased over those voted in the year.

CLASS VII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

	£.
Total 1887-88	121,578
„ 1888-89	72,527
Decrease	£49,051

	1888-89.	1887-88.	Incr ease.	Decrease.	
	£	£	£	£	
Works and Industries, Ireland	26,000	50,000	—	24,000	Partly a re-vote of the Special Grant which will not all be spent in the Current Year.
World Exhibition	—	2,650	—	} 25,719	
Operation of the Suez Canal.	—	17,000	—		Special Services in the Current Year.
Contributions to Civil Service Contingencies Fund	—	6,069	—		

(3.) Some improvements have been made this Session in the arrangement of Civil Estimates, principally in the description of Sub-heads, in order to secure greater uniformity of grouping similar services in different Votes. This has involved some transfer of items, but not of sufficient consequence to notice in the Votes. Notes have also been added to every Vote, showing the amounts expended in other Votes, or charged on the Consolidated Fund, in connection with the same service. By this arrangement the total estimated charge of each service can now be ascertained.

The principle of appropriation of Extra Receipts in aid of the Votes which has been for some years adopted in the case of the Army and Navy Estimates,

has only, as yet, been adopted to a limited extent in the Civil Service Estimates. But in some special cases, such as when a new service is placed upon the Votes by Act of Parliament, and provision is, at the same time, made by the Act for repayment of the expenses of administration by fees or otherwise, the receipts are then taken in aid of the Vote. The expenses incurred under the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act of last Session, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts and others, have been dealt with in this manner; also the contributions of India and the Colonies to the cost of the Packet Service.

Revenue Departments.

(4.) The Estimates for the Customs and Inland Revenue necessarily depend rather upon the nature than upon the amount of the Revenue to be collected. They have been in course of reduction for several years. Those of the Post Office may be expected to steadily grow as the business increases.

CUSTOMS.

The effective charge of the Customs Service has fallen from £855,077 in 1882-83 to £739,645 in 1888-89, a decrease of £115,432. During the reorganisation by which this has chiefly been effected, the non-effective charge in the same period has been raised from £155,078 to £198,275, an increase of £43,197, part of which however is due to pensioners over 60 years of age who had already earned their retirement. The immediate net reduction of charge has therefore been £72,235, which will be increased as the non-effective charges fall in. A considerable saving has been effected by the reduction of many separate bonding warehouses and their amalgamation with Inland Revenue Establishments, but large reductions have also been made by more economical methods of administration.*

The decrease of £13,928 in the charge for next year is almost entirely due to reductions of establishment.

INLAND REVENUE.

The Inland Revenue requires for its service in the ensuing year £43,750 more than in the current year. But the whole of this increase is due to the intermittent charge† of the triennial valuation of property under Schedules A and B of the Income Tax outside the metropolitan area, which usually brings in additional tax to the extent of £80,000 to £100,000 a-year. The total of the temporary addition from this cause is £44,100, so that the permanent charge is in fact less than that of the current year. A fairer idea of the relative expense of the Department is gained by comparing the charge of 1885-86, the last year of triennial valuation. In that year the total charge was £1,823,157, or £15,528 more than in the ensuing year. The lessened charge of the ensuing year includes £234,044 for Pensions against £212,653 in 1885-86, so that the reduction

* CUSTOMS.				† INLAND REVENUE.			
—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.	—	Effective.	Non-Effective.	TOTAL.
	£	£	£		£	£	£
1882-83	855,077	155,078	1,010,155	1882-83	1,587,937	212,685	1,800,622
1883-84	838,830	167,955	1,006,785		(Triennial Valuation)		
1884-85	810,240	176,711	986,951	1883-84	1,557,772	210,594	1,768,366
1885-86	796,125	181,608	977,733	1884-85	1,551,396	210,619	1,762,015
1886-87	772,010	184,047	956,067	1885-86	1,610,504	212,653	1,823,157
1887-88	756,020	197,228	953,248		(Triennial Valuation)		
1888-89	739,645	198,275	937,920	1886-87	1,583,227	214,279	1,797,506
				1887-88	1,549,704	214,175	1,763,878
				1888-89	1,573,585	234,044	1,807,629

of effective charge is above £36,000 a-year. This increased pension charge has all been added in the current year, in which extensive reorganisations have taken place, including the adoption of the working day of seven hours; by which the effective staff has been reduced upwards of 200 in number and £18,407 in cost. A large part of the resulting non-effective charge (£13,807) is in this case also paid to pensioners over 60 years of age who have already earned their retirement.

POST OFFICE AND TELEGRAPHS.

The combined Estimates of £7,703,502 for the Post Office and Telegraph Services (exclusive of the Packet Service), are swollen by the large provision of £185,000 for purchase of sites to meet the great extension of buildings required by the development of business, especially that of the Parcels Post, all over the country. Excluding the charge for sites in both years the increased working expenses of the two services for the ensuing year amount to £327,484, of which the ordinary increment of salaries and the pay of additional staff have alone added in London £93,865, and in the provinces £168,642, the remainder being entirely due to the growth of business.

PACKET SERVICE.

The contracts for the Eastern, Australian, and West Indian Mail Services, though made by the Postmaster General, are in effect joint undertakings of the Imperial and Indian and Colonial Post Offices. The addition to the Estimates for 1888-9 of a charge of £170,000 for the Australian Service has afforded the opportunity of taking the Indian and Colonial contributions as Appropriations-in-Aid of the Vote. The necessity will thus be avoided of unnecessarily swelling both Expenditure and Revenue, and of asking Parliament to vote a gross sum, of which a large proportion would afterwards be paid to the Exchequer as Extra Receipts.

Treasury Chambers,)
9 March 1888. }

W. L. JACKSON.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £29,260, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1839, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that this Vote might be divided into three heads—namely, palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty; secondly, palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty; and, thirdly, palaces which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He had given Notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote by the sum of £500 as a protest against the system of expenditure upon palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty. He did not complain of Hampton Court Palace, which might be considered a people's palace, but there was an item in the Vote against which he did protest for Hampton Court Stud-house. He had never yet been able to discover what on earth Hampton Court Stud-house was. He understood that a certain number of cream-coloured horses were bred there; but he did not know what became of them, although the country had to pay £400 per annum for the maintenance and repair of Hampton Court Stud-house, and £15 for furniture. Then, again, there was a palace at Kew Green. He had had great difficulty in finding where that palace was at Kew, and he did not think there were half-a-dozen Gentlemen in the House who had the slightest idea where it was, or who lived there. Nevertheless, £556 appeared in the Vote as a charge for its maintenance and repair, together with £20 for furniture and £156 for fuel. There were a number of other houses which were called palaces, but which were not palaces in the sense of ever

being occupied by the Sovereign. One of them was a house which was lent to one of the French ex-Royal Dukes, and its maintenance and repair cost about £600. In addition, there was an item for money expended in furniture. If it was neither desirable to let these houses or pull them down, those who occupied them ought certainly to maintain them and keep them in repair, and not come upon the nation for furniture. He would, therefore, move the reduction of the vote by the sum of £500, having reference to the items for Hampton Court Stud-house, Kew Gardens, and the other buildings he had mentioned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £28,760, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, this was not the first time he had had the pleasure of replying to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) on the question of the maintenance of the Royal Palaces, and he was afraid that he could not add anything to the information he had already given on several previous occasions, and which had always been considered satisfactory by the House. The fact was that in former times the expense of maintaining and furnishing the Royal Palaces always fell upon the Civil List. From time to time that Civil List, as the hon. Member knew very well, had been very much reduced. In 1831 it was reduced by the sum of £547,000 per annum, and in 1838, on the accession of Her Majesty, it was further reduced by the sum of £215,000 per annum. When those arrangements were made the country undertook to pay the expense of maintaining and furnishing these Royal Palaces. That was part of the bargain made on that occasion on behalf of the country with the Sovereign for the time being. He could not, therefore, understand how the hon. Member, or any other hon. Member, should dispute the way in which the bargain was carried out, or propose to set it aside. There might be hon. Members who thought that at some future accession to the Throne the Civil List might be still further reduced; but he could not understand how they could desire to break down a bargain which

had been deliberately entered into at the beginning of the present reign, and he could not think that the hon. Member seriously proposed that such a thing should be done. In regard to particular points which had been raised by the hon. Member, he must say that there was no difference whatever in principle in the carrying out of the bargain between the palaces in the personal occupation of Her Majesty and those which were not in the occupation of Her Majesty. The principle was the same all through. The country had chosen to take off from the Civil List the charge of maintaining these palaces, and certain sums were put on the Estimates from year to year for the purpose of honestly carrying out the bargain which had been made. As to the particular instance referred to by the hon. Member—namely, Hampton Court Stud-house, that house was attached to Hampton Court Palace and occupied by the Crown Equerries. The stables attached to them were used for the purpose of producing certain kind of horses. The hon. Member would like to know what became of the horses. He (Mr. Plunket) was not bound to know. [*Cries of "Oh!"*] Certainly not; but, as a matter of fact, the horses were used for the purpose of horsing Royal carriages. The hon. Member for Northampton said the horses were of a cream colour. Very likely that might be the colour that might be required. Personally, he knew nothing about it, nor did he know whether the hon. Member had a preference for that colour or not. As to the palace at Kew Gardens, it was preserved by the nation, and if the hon. Member had really any serious curiosity on the subject he might easily see it. All these houses were Royal Palaces which Her Majesty had inherited, and which used to be maintained out of the Civil List. They were now, by the agreement entered into with Her Majesty, maintained by the taxpayers of the country and fell upon the Estimates. He could give no precise reply to the question of the hon. Member as to who were the inhabitants of these palaces, inasmuch as they changed from year to year; nor was it any part of his duty to inquire who were in the occupation of them. He was afraid that he could not add more in the way of explanation, or give any further infor-

mation, than he had given in previous years. He could quite understand that at some future time, if the hon. Member thought a further economy could be effected by an alteration of the Civil List, he might make some proposal of a serious character on the subject. It would, however, be pressing the principle of economy too far to ask the House of Commons in the present day to set aside the bargain made by the Sovereign as regarded these Royal Palaces. He, therefore, hoped his hon. Friend would not press his Motion for the reduction of the sum asked for in this respect.

* MR. LABOUCHERE said, he did not deny that the Civil List had been reduced. There had been numerous expenses thrown upon the Civil List formerly, such as the maintenance of the whole of the Diplomatic Service, the Judges, and so on, which items had never been removed from the list; but he protested against the pious theory of a bargain having been struck between Her Majesty and the nation with regard to the maintenance of these Royal Palaces. There was never any specific bargain between the Crown and the country. The Civil List at the commencement of the Reign was decided on after an exhaustive inquiry as to the expenditure of William IV., and it was upon that basis that the Civil List was established. It was perfectly true that various items on the Civil List were not put down as a charge to Her Majesty, and as a necessary consequence the cost of maintaining certain houses would necessarily fall upon the taxpayer if it was wished to keep them up; but many hon. Members who sat on that side of the House were of opinion that it was quite enough for the nation to bear the cost of maintaining the palaces actually occupied by the Sovereign without maintaining and tinkering up a lot of old houses in various parts of the country, which Her Majesty, instead of occupying herself, granted to certain people for their lives. Many hon. Members thought that it would be better and cheaper for the country to allow these buildings to go to rack and ruin rather than to spend the money of the taxpayers in repairing them, seeing that they were of no benefit to the country, but only to those who lived in them. At any rate, those who occupied them should have them on the

same terms as the man who took a house upon a repairing lease. He certainly did not agree with the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). The right hon. Gentleman had answered Questions put to him on this subject before, and had always fallen back on the stupidity of our ancestors in making a bad bargain with the Sovereign; but he (Mr. Labouchere) did not believe that our ancestors had been such fools as the right hon. Gentleman appeared to think, or that they had entered into such a bargain as that which the right hon. Gentleman suggested. If the right hon. Gentleman could not give a more satisfactory answer upon this subject than that which he had just given, he should feel compelled to divide the House upon the question of the reduction of the Vote, in order to put a stop to what appeared to him to be a reckless, wasteful, and useless expenditure.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) said, he thought that the Committee ought to get at the bottom of this so-called bargain between the Sovereign and the country. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had mentioned the word "bargain" or "agreement" five or six times, and had spoken of it as a bargain which the House of Commons was bound to adhere to. If such a bargain had been entered into, it must have been embodied in some document, and he should like to know where that document was to be found? The contention of the right hon. Gentleman was that the Civil List Act was a contract between the Crown and the country. He (Mr. Robertson) altogether denied that. He denied that anything was contained in that Act with which Parliament might not interfere at any moment it chose. The right hon. Gentleman's theory went still further than that. He said that they were not only bound to respect the Civil List Act, but also payments which were made outside that Act. As the right hon. Gentleman maintained that there was an agreement between the Crown and the country, he called upon him to produce it, or to explain what its contents were and what it required the country to do. Unless the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee some more satisfactory answer in reference to this matter, he should feel bound

Mr. Labouchere

to support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) ought to give the Committee some information as to the uses to which these palaces were put. He did not go as far as his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) when he said that they ought not to keep up any palaces except those which were occupied by the Crown, because it was obvious that certain places were required for the exercise of hospitality. He, therefore, did not agree that all the palaces which were not in the actual occupation of the Sovereign should be pulled down. The right hon. Gentleman, however, seemed to put the matter on too high a ground. He implied that there was a distinct bargain and a schedule of palaces that were to be kept up. If that were so, and there was any specific bargain between the Sovereign and the country in existence, it ought to be produced; if there was no such bargain, it amounted simply to this—that by the Civil List, which was drawn up on behalf of Her Majesty on her accession to the Throne, the country undertook to keep up certain buildings for the purposes of Her Majesty. In that case, he thought it was incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) to tell the Committee what the purposes were for which these palaces were occupied. Take the case of Hampton Court Palace. He was bound to say that it was not inappropriate to provide apartments in that palace for the accommodation of the lady relatives of distinguished officers who had fallen in the service of their country. So far as Kew Palace was concerned, he (Sir George Campbell) had seen it through the railings, and it appeared to be a very mysterious place. It did not seem as if anybody ever inhabited it. It cut off part of the gardens, and gave an air of secrecy to the place.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) to say that the Committee had no right to refuse this Vote. In that case, what was the necessity of bringing it forward, and why was Parliament asked to pass it? He thought that the hon. Member for

Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had made out a very strong case, and he should have great pleasure in supporting by his vote the Amendment which had been moved for pulling down this extravagant expenditure.

MR. PLUNKET said, he regretted that his explanation had not given satisfaction to the hon. Member. He thought it unnecessary to explain the matter more than he had done, but from no wish to give either a discourteous or unsatisfactory answer. The statement he had made was that at the time the Civil List was settled, at the beginning of the present reign, a bargain was entered into between the country and the Sovereign. [MR. LABOUCHERE: Where?] It was a bargain entered into between the country and the Sovereign, that in consideration of certain large reductions which were made in the Civil List at that time the arrangement whereby certain expenses were borne by the Votes should be continued throughout the present Reign. That bargain was contained in successive Civil List Acts, and the particular Civil List Act which governed the present arrangement was the 1 & 2 Vict. (1837), c. 2. The 1st section of that Act recited the principle of the bargain to which he had referred, and the bargain was carried out throughout the rest of the Acts. The effect of the Act generally was that several reductions were made in the Civil List, and certain expenses connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown were to be borne by the sums voted by the taxpayers of the country. In consequence, among the matters connected with the honour and dignity of the Crown was included the maintenance of certain palaces, some of which were in the personal occupation of the Sovereign, some, like St. James's Palace, which were partly in the occupation of the Queen, and certain other palaces which were not in the personal occupation of Her Majesty at all.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked, if a list of them was contained in any Schedule?

MR. PLUNKET said, he did not think they were contained in any Schedule attached to that or to any of the previous Acts. They were, however, the purposes which had always been included, and there was the same obligation under the Act to keep them up and maintain them. It would be un-

gracious to criticize the provisions of the Act; but it was, of course, open to the Committee to criticize its administration by the Office of Works, and to say that too much money was being expended in a particular direction. He could only say again, as he had already said, that if the Committee were to refuse to give effect to the policy of the Civil List Act, it would be in his opinion, and also he was sure in the opinion of the country, a departure from the bargain made, although, perhaps, not exactly in words, but in its sense, at the time when the Civil List was made between the country and the Sovereign. That arrangement had ever since been faithfully carried out, and he believed that it had been economically and faithfully carried out to the advantage of the ratepayers of the country. He hoped the explanation he had endeavoured to give of the policy of the Act on which the arrangement depended would be satisfactory.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman amounted to this—that Her Majesty gave up certain Crown lands, in return for which the taxpayers maintained the honour and dignity of the Crown. But they did not recognize the personal right of the Sovereign to the Crown lands. The right was first put forward in the time of George III. There was then a servile Minister, who put in the Preamble of the Civil List Act a statement that His Majesty gave up his right to the Crown lands during life. That statement had been repeated in the recital of succeeding Civil List Acts; but the fact that Her Majesty gave up her right to the Crown lands did not bestow any right of the kind on Her Majesty. If it amused a Minister of the Crown to put in an Act a statement that the Sovereign gave up certain rights which they denied she had, of course they could not make any objection; but, assuming that this bargain did exist, what did it amount to? It amounted to this—that on the side of the taxpayers they engaged as a *quid pro quo* for the Crown lands to maintain the honour and dignity of the Crown. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the Committee that the honour and dignity of the Crown depended upon furnishing and maintaining a house for an Equerry at Hampton Court, in order to look after a few cream-

coloured horses which were brought out every three or four years? Or did he mean to say that it depended upon maintaining those various houses, one of which was given to a French Prince? The honour and dignity of the Crown would be maintained if all those houses which were spread over the public parks were to fall into ruin. He could understand that the palaces occupied by Her Majesty, or partly occupied by her, ought to be maintained; but the maintenance and furnishing of all these small houses spread over the Royal Parks had nothing whatever to do with the honour and dignity of the Crown. The Committee ought to refuse this money; but whether it did so or not, he thought that, under the circumstances, the Committee, at least, had the right to decide whether it was properly and legitimately spent for the maintenance of the honour and dignity of the Crown. It was an item which appeared in the Votes every year, and he presumed that hon. Members were called upon to express an opinion upon the Estimates. When, however, they were prepared to do so, they were told that they had no right to criticize the Estimates, but must be prepared to vote them as they stood. It was a perfect absurdity to ask the Committee to take that course, and he should certainly go to a Division as a protest against the system.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) had entirely failed to substantiate the theory of a contract with which he began to defend the Vote. He (Mr. Robertson) wished to point out that the right hon. Gentleman had mixed up two entirely different theories. He had started with the theory that the country had undertaken to pay the expense of maintaining these palaces; but, in his second speech, the right hon. Gentleman said that the obligation was incurred in consideration of a large reduction of the Civil List—that was to say, that the Civil List of Queen Victoria being to a certain extent similar to the Civil List of her Predecessor, there was a bargain entered into that the charges heretofore borne should continue to be borne. Now, what was the evidence the right hon. Gentleman had produced? He had produced a recital in the Civil List Act, which stated that in consideration of the surrender of the Crown

lands the country was to make suitable provision for the honour and dignity of the Crown. It might be said that that was a contract whereby the House of Commons was forbidden to enter into the Civil List Act or to amend it, the same as any other Statute. He did not admit that assertion; but, granting it, what the right hon. Gentleman had to prove was that at the time of the passing of the Act there was anything like a contract or undertaking that those expenses outside the Civil List Act were to be borne by the Estimates. That view of the case was altogether unsupported by any evidence the right hon. Gentleman had produced, or could produce. As the right hon. Gentleman had been unwise enough to drag the Civil List into the discussion, he (Mr. Robertson) wished to point out how certain items in the Estimate and the finding of them appeared to be governed by the grant made in the Civil List Act. There were six classes of grants contained in that Act, and the second class was for the salaries for Her Majesty's Household, while the third was for the expenses of Her Majesty's Household. There was no definition in the Act itself as to what those two items would cover; but he should have supposed that a fair interpretation would cover the maintenance of the palaces to which the hon. Member for Northampton had referred, while the other class covered the salaries paid to persons in the service of Her Majesty in houses set apart for the use of Her Majesty. In the Vote now before the Committee, he found the sum of £2,352 set down for salaries and allowances to Her Majesty's servants in the Royal Palaces. Why were those salaries and allowances not paid out of the third branch of the Civil List, and why were not the expenses for the maintenance and repairs of those houses paid for out of the second branch of the Civil List? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give an answer to that question. The House having made a provision of £131,200 for salaries and allowances to persons in the service of Her Majesty, he could not for a moment understand how it was reasonable to come down year after year to ask the House for additional salaries and allowances also connected with the Queen's Palaces. Some of these salaries and allowances were, no doubt, small in

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amount—for instance, in the case of Buckingham Palace, there was the insignificant item of £8 for the rat-catcher, £1 1s. a-week to a labourer, and £1 1s. to a turncock; but surely it was ridiculous, after having made a grant of £131,000 to Her Majesty for salaries to her servants, to come down to that House and ask for a Vote of £8 to pay a rat-catcher. The principle was an important one, and as the right hon. Gentleman had insisted in dragging the Civil List into discussion he wished to ask him on what principle these expenses were not included in the Civil List in Classes I. and II.? On what principle was the Civil List maintained? He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give this information to the Committee. Unless he could maintain it, he should certainly vote in favour of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Northampton.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the First Commissioner of Works to give an explanation of an increase in the Vote for Holyrood Palace. He found that the expense of warders there had been increased from £234 to £239?

Mr. PLUNKET said, the salaries to which the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson) had referred were salaries of persons who were employed for the purpose of taking care of these buildings and keeping them in proper repair; and if the Office of Works was to be responsible for the repair and maintenance of buildings, of course they must employ persons even of such humble calling as a turncock and rat-catcher. If there was any absurdity in the matter, it was the absurdity of any hon. Member criticizing such expenditure. With regard to Holyrood Palace, he was afraid he could not at that moment tell the hon. Member (Mr. Hunter) what the particular increase was due to, as he had not at hand the details of the expenditure. The increase, however, was very slight, and during the last two or three years there had been a considerable reduction in all these items. He was informed at the moment by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that the increase in expenditure at Holyrood Palace was owing to the employment of certain parts of Holyrood Palace which had been thrown open to the public;

and arrangements had been made with the Corporation of Edinburgh, under which it was necessary to employ the additional servants.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 37; Noes 77: Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2). £1,500, to complete the sum for Marlborough House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he could inform the Committee what the total amount spent on sanitary works in connection with Marlborough House had been? He believed that a great many hundred pounds had been spent every year for a number of years in connection with the sanitary works of the residence of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Indeed, he believed that a far larger sum had been expended than would have been necessary to rebuild Marlborough House altogether.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, he hardly knew what the hon. Member meant. No doubt, there had been from time to time considerable expenditure incurred in connection with sanitary works at Marlborough House; but he did not know over how many years the expenditure had extended. He believed it had been going on ever since His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales began to reside there; but he was unable to say what the particular items amounted to.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, if they had not reached £10,000?

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was unable to say, nor for how long a time the expenses had been going on.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that it had been going on, at any rate, for the last 15 years—ever since the drains were taken up in Pall Mall and the pond was drained.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was altogether unable to enter into any details; but if the hon. Member would put down a Question upon the Paper; he would endeavour to obtain the information he required.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would do so on the Report

Mr. PLUNKET said, he would be prepared to give the information on the Report.

Vote agreed to.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £77,013, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that he had always protested against the expenditure under this head, and he did so on two grounds—first, because he considered that the amount was too large; and, secondly, because the public were excluded from very large portions of the different public parks. With regard to the Richmond Park, there was a larger number of officials there than any private gentleman would employ. There was a Ranger, a Deputy Ranger, a Bailiff, a Superintendent under the Ranger, and an Assistant Superintendent. These were the head officials who had to look after others. He had always noticed in the accounts which had been submitted before that very large items were set down for gamekeepers. He had called attention to those items more than once. A salary of £250 a-year used to be paid to head-gamekeepers, and £200 a-year to sub-gamekeepers—such as assistants and deputies. He did not, however, see these amounts in the present Estimates, and he wished to know where these gamekeepers were? These gamekeepers were really supposed to be employed to guard the deer; but, in point of fact, he imagined they were there because they were there. Of course, it was necessary for a number of people to look after the deer; but he doubted whether any persons in the position of gamekeepers would be paid by any private gentleman £250 or £200 per annum. He was strongly of opinion that this expenditure ought to be done away with. He could not flatter himself that he had induced the Government to discharge these men; but he very much doubted whether the deer ought to be maintained. They were miserable, tame creatures, except at one time of the year, when they became a nuisance to mankind and a danger. In point of fact, there had been some of these deer running at the people who

made use of the Park, and notices had been put up warning the public against going too near them. Surely the Parks were made for human beings, and not for deer. In Hyde Park they had done away with the deer in order to allow the public free access to the Park. The amount of pleasure which people could derive from looking at the deer did not justify the expenditure incurred in keeping them. Another objection in regard to Public Parks was that a large part of them was taken away from the public use of the community. His hon. Friend the Member for South-West Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) had moved for a Return which had been laid before the House, in which it was stated what amount of land had been taken away and what amount had been enclosed in the different Parks included in the list given in the Return. There was, however, another Park which had not been included, though he did not know why it should not have been—namely, Windsor Great Park. Bushey Park consisted of 994 acres, and the public were excluded from 322 acres which were used as pasture land, meadow land, and land for the use of the Royal Palaces. He supposed the wonderful cream coloured horses required this land. Hampton Court Park contained 752 acres; but how much would the Committee suppose was reserved for the public? Not one single acre. Hampton Court Park consisted, as he had said, of 752 acres, and from the whole of that area the public were excluded. Now, Hampton Court and Bushey Park were very much frequented by the people, and it was preposterous that the whole of one Park, and a large portion of the other, should be taken away from them. In Richmond Park, also, 440 acres were taken away from the public. He would anticipate the right hon. Gentleman in pointing out that between 1873 and 1887 more acres had been thrown open than had been enclosed. That was all very well, but he wanted all the enclosed acres thrown open to the public, because they belonged to the public, and ought to be devoted to purposes of recreation. They were never intended to be given to Rangers, Deputy Rangers, and similar persons; but the whole should be thrown open to the public, except some small enclosures for timber and so on. He had given Notice of his intention to

move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £500, and he would now move that Amendment with the view of securing that the subject should be discussed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £76,513, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, that the hon. Member for Northampton was, of course, aware that there had been a considerable reduction in his Vote in the present year; and not only had there been a reduction compared with the Estimates of last year, but compared with the Estimates of a few years ago. That was, no doubt, owing to a great extent to the Act passed last year, a very good Act indeed, in passing which the hon. Member himself had a considerable share. That Act transferred a certain number of Metropolitan Parks, which previously fell on the Estimates for maintenance, to the Metropolitan Board of Works. There had also been a considerable reduction in the expenditure on the Parks which were still maintained by the Office of Works. The hon. Member for Northampton had directed attention to particular points. In the first place, he complained of the office of Ranger, Deputy Ranger, and other officials he had named. They were the same officials who had always been employed in connection with the Parks. The hon. Member said there was a difference in the nomenclature applied to these officials, and he asked why the name had been changed.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had not asked that, but he had asked where the gamekeepers had gone.

MR. PLUNKET thought the hon. Member went on to say that there was a difference in the title of these officials. It was quite true, and the alteration was in the first place, he believed, suggested by the criticisms which the hon. Member had himself from time to time made upon these Votes. The answer of the Government always was that these officials were not, in the true sense of the word, gamekeepers. Their business was to look after the general management of the Parks, and, therefore, they had now been called Superintendents.

A part of their business was to take care of the deer, and it was for that reason that in former Estimates they were described as "gamekeepers." It was part of their functions then, and still was, to take care of the deer, and the only sense in which the officials were employed as gamekeepers was in having care of the deer in the Parks. The deer had been under their care for centuries; there were about 1,500 head of deer in Richmond Park—the same in number as in the days of Cromwell. Of course, the question whether the deer ought to be maintained or not was quite another matter. He did not agree with the hon. Gentleman, and he did not think that the public would agree with him, that it would be wise to remove the deer from the Park. He believed that if they were to have a Park of that kind, one of the best specimens we possessed of an English Park, the presence of the deer added an element of great beauty and interest to the general effect of the Park. He was entitled to say, before passing away from this subject, that there was other game in the Park as well as deer—pheasants, for instance. They were not maintained at the public expense at all, but at the expense of the Ranger, who provided the pheasants and the food for them, and also gamekeepers in the ordinary sense to take care of the pheasants, and of the other game to be found in the Parks. In regard to the question of enclosures, the hon. Member had himself admitted that they were less extensive now than they were some years ago. The enclosures in Richmond Park were mainly for the purpose of protecting the new plantations which were Crown property. As in the course of time the older trees became unsightly and fell into decay, they were replaced by young trees from those plantations. He could assure the hon. Member that there would be no unnecessary expense connected with the plantations.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) said, there was a subject connected with this Vote which he desired to bring under the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. There were certain Parks in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh which were public Parks under the Office of Works in the same sense

as those in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis. He was bound to say that when any question connected with these Parks was brought before the right hon. Gentleman he had always evinced a readiness to consider the representations made to him. The people of Edinburgh at the present moment complained of certain petty restrictions that were placed upon their enjoyment of the Arboretum which had been handed over to the Office of Works for management. The Arboretum was primarily intended for the use of the public, and was only in a secondary degree a scientific institution. This might appear to be comparatively a small matter, seeing that the Regulations to which he referred related to the admission of perambulators, the opening of gates, and the hours of entering into the Arboretum and of closing it. He understood the objection taken by the Office of Works to meeting the views of the inhabitants was that the Arboretum must not be looked upon as a Public Park, but must be placed in the same category as Kew Gardens, and regarded as public gardens made use of for scientific purposes. The use of the Arboretum as a Park was regarded by the Office of Works as a matter of secondary importance. Upon that ground Rules had been drawn up for the use of the Arboretum similar to those which prevailed at Kew Gardens. These might be suitable to the Botanic Gardens, which adjoined the Arboretum, but they were not suitable to the Arboretum. In the summer time no place was more frequented than the Arboretum. If any hon. Member would go there upon a summer afternoon he would find how largely it was frequented by all classes of the community living in Edinburgh; but he would also find petty restrictions which were imposed to guard the public from the full enjoyment of the Gardens. There was another and most important point in regard to the future management of the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. It was generally known that it was under the contemplation of the Government to transfer the Botanical Gardens and the Arboretum from the Board of Works to the University of Edinburgh. It was a proposal which had been mooted for many years past, but which had never yet been carried out. It had always been steadily

Mr. Buchanan

resisted by the general community of Edinburgh, by the University of Edinburgh, and by the late Professor and the present Professor of Botany. There was, however, a distinction between the Botanical Gardens and the Arboretum; and if the Government intended to transfer both to the University, they would, in the Arboretum, be transferring to a learned body an institution the object of which was only in a secondary degree a scientific one, its primary object being the enjoyment of the public. There were two grounds of objection to the transfer of both institutions. The first was that of public policy. It had hitherto been the policy of the State to maintain in each of the three divisions of the United Kingdom a Botanic Garden primarily for the encouragement of science; and it would appear, as regards this proposed transfer, that the Treasury were anxious to shift the responsibility for the future development of the Botanic Garden in Edinburgh on to the University of Edinburgh. The University would be placed in a most invidious position—they would be hampered, in developing the Gardens, by the insufficiency of the sums at their disposal; in the second place, they would be obliged to look exclusively to the scientific uses of the Gardens; and, in the third place, by the claims of the people of Edinburgh and the people of Scotland, who had long looked on these Gardens as a national institution.

Mr. PLUNKET said, the last point raised by the hon. Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) had reference to the policy of the future as to the maintenance of the Arboretum at Edinburgh under the management of the Office of Works, or whether the Arboretum should be handed over to the University of Edinburgh on the understanding that it would be maintained by that institution. That was a question of policy upon which he was not in a position to say anything definitely; but he was quite sure that the objections which had been stated by the hon. Member, and the grounds he had brought forward in support of his own views that the change should not be made, would receive that full consideration to which everything which came from him was entitled. As far as the present management of the Arboretum and Botanical Gardens was concerned, he could assure the hon.

ber that while he remained at the of Works, if any proposal or re-entation should be made as to any ation in the Rules and Regulations he enjoyment of these Gardens, or ours when they ought to be opened closed, he would go as far as he to meet the wishes of the public. must, however, point out that the of maintaining the Arboretum was solely the enjoyment of the public e locality, but to encourage the of botanic science; and it would great mistake if such arrangements made that the Arboretum could e used for the purposes of botanical . As the hon. Gentleman had d, the same questions were raised e case of Kew Gardens, and ar-ements had to be made to reconcile laims of sightseers with those of nts by reserving the Gardens for nts in the earlier part of the day. ould only say that his wish was, as s possible, to meet the convenience e public consistently with the ts for which these Gardens were tained. If the hon. Member would sent exactly what alteration he ght ought to be introduced in refer- to the Arboretum at Edinburgh he d be glad to consider it.

1. BUCHANAN said, he was ed to the right hon. Gentleman for ourtesy. He had put himself in unication with the Office of Works e subject a few months ago. He d not trouble the House with more ls; but he would point out that the retum at Edinburgh stood in a dif- t position from Kew Gardens, be- the Arboretum was bought and out by the people of Edinburgh at t of £18,000 as a Public Park. It therefore, a distinctly higher claim considered as a public garden for ee use of the people than the Royal ical Gardens. He wished the right Gentleman to state, as the matter ot absolutely clear at present, whe- the Treasury intended to hand over Arboretum as well as the Botanical ons?

1. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green,) said, the hon. Member for hampton had already referred to teturn for which he had moved last

He did not intend again to go the ground which had already been ed by his hon. Friend, but there

were a few features in the Return which had not been referred to, and which he thought it desirable to call attention to, because he would be glad to have some further information upon the subject from the First Commissioner of Works. In the first place, he would direct atten- tion to Greenwich Park. In Greenwich Park it would be found that there was a very considerable enclosure. It con- sisted of 63 acres of ground, and the use to which it was applied was thus de- scribed in the Return, "Ranger's Lodge, Offices, and Meadows, and Buildings for Residence." He wished to know if that enclosure had been recently made, or, at all events, whether there had been a considerable addition to it within recent years? If there had been no addition within recent years, he wished to know when the enclosure had been made? He need not refer further to Bushey Park, because his hon. Friend had drawn at- tention to the chief items in the Return which related to that Park. At the same time, he thought the public would be of opinion that it was an extreme step to exclude the community from the use of one-third of that Park. He came next to Richmond Park. There were some items there to which the attention of the Committee ought to be di- rected. 141 acres were reserved for the purposes of plantation. There were 104 acres of meadow ground. The Ranger's meadow consisted of 20 acres, and two acres were set aside for the Queen's Kitchen Garden. It certainly seemed to him that that was a survival of a time very different from our own, for it was extremely difficult to imagine what adequate or appreciable use the Crown could make of a kitchen garden in Richmond Park. Further, there were considerable enclosures in connection with residence in the Park. The most flagrant instance of the exclusion of the public was undoubtedly that to which his hon. Friend had referred—namely, the case of Hampton Court Park. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman did not say a single word in reference to that case. Hampton Court Park was as large as Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens put together, and yet the public were excluded from the whole of that area, which extended from Hampton Court Gardens right up to Kingston Bridge, and was bounded in one direc- tion by the towing-path of the river,

and in the other by the public highway from Hampton Court to Kingston. Upon the whole length of the road the Park was surrounded by a dead brick wall. He thought that even if it were necessary to exclude the public, they might, at all events, have a peep at the Park. Certainly, anyone who was in the habit of travelling upon that road must be of opinion that a dead wall was an eyesore of a most objectionable character. What was the use made of the Park? As far as he could gather, it was devoted entirely to the feeding of deer. Deer, however, were fed in other Parks without excluding the public from the use of such Parks. He should like the right hon. Gentleman to explain why the same course with regard to deer was not adopted at Hampton Court Park which was followed in other places. In the next place, he would ask, what was the use which was made of the deer? They were informed last year, in the course of the discussion which was raised on this subject, that the venison was presented to Government officials. Now, when he was a Government official he never received any venison. He did not know whom the Government officials were to whom the venison was presented, but he conjectured that they were highly-paid officials who could very well dispense with the perquisite, if it were a perquisite. He believed that some of the Government officials who received the venison would be glad to be relieved from it, seeing that they were called upon to pay a fee when the venison was presented to them. The Park was not entirely devoted to the feeding of deer, because he saw that a certain payment was made by the Master of the Horse, who seemed to be responsible for the deer to the Chief Commissioner of Works for the pasturing of the Parks. What, however, was the payment which was actually made? It only amounted to £280 a year for 752 acres, or something like 7s. an acre. He had been down to see the Park, and he found that the land was very good grazing land indeed, and he should say that the fair letting marketable value of the land would be about £2 per acre. If that were so, he failed to see why the public should suffer from the land being let to the Master of the Horse at the very inadequate sum of 7s. per acre. While he

found that the Park cost the public over £1,000 a-year, the only return obtained was something like £500, so that there was a dead loss of £500 a-year. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would explain, if the matter was capable of explanation, why the public were altogether excluded from this Park? He knew that it was felt to be a great grievance that the people should have no use of the Park; and, even admitting that it was necessary to feed deer in it, that formed no adequate reason for the exclusion of the public, because it was well known that in other Parks from which the public were not excluded deer were fed. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not pass over this matter in absolute silence, as he had done with regard to the reference made by the hon. Member for Northampton to the case of Bushey Park.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) wished to call attention to the exclusion of the public from a considerable portion of Regent's Park. The whole area of the Park was 472 acres, and from more than one-fourth of it—namely, 130 acres, the public were excluded. No doubt there were some excellent enclosures, such as the Zoological Gardens and the Botanical Gardens; but he could not understand why the public should be excluded from certain land situate on the western side of the Park, seeing that admission was secured by others on the payment of a fee at the following rates—residents, 21s. per annum; non-residents, 42s. per annum. He had often seen persons gazing through the railings of the enclosure, envious of the enjoyment which the privileged few were deriving; and, seeing that the public paid £1,000 per annum for maintaining this Park, he thought it hard that they should be excluded from the enjoyment of it. He certainly thought the particular enclosure to which he referred might be thrown open. He observed that a number of houses in this Public Park were let at incredibly low rents. One of them, which had a garden of five acres, was let for £114 10s. a-year. He believed it would command that rent without any garden ground at all. There were other houses and enclosures let at equally ridiculous rents. He presumed the reason was

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that they were letting the old leases not yet run out. He should, however, like to have an explanation on the subject, and an understanding that when the existing leases ran out the houses would be relet and the enclosures thrown open. He did not think that it was the wish of the public to continue to maintain Parks like this for rent-earning purposes. The population around the Park was rapidly increasing, and it was felt to be a very great hardship that Her Majesty's subjects should be excluded from any portion of the Park.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, it seemed to him that a reduction of £500 in the Vote was altogether inadequate. The Return moved for by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), on which the hon. Member for Northampton had based the reduction he had moved, would, if it were examined, show an abundant reason why a very much larger reduction should be made. On page 9 of the Estimates it was shown that the amount of £2,400 was expected to be received during the course of the financial year for what were called estimated extra receipts. Now, that Return showed, first of all, how very misleading and untrustworthy many of the Returns were which were submitted to Parliament, or else it showed that the Return submitted to the House and the Motions of hon. Members were of a very extraordinary character. This Return showed not only the area of the Parks and the area from which the public were excluded, but what public revenue, if any, was derived from the said area. From Bushey Park the revenue derived was £91; from Hampton Court Park, £577; Holyrood, £375; Hyde Park, £466; Regent's Park, £2,536; Richmond Old Deer Park, £972; and from Richmond Park £500. If the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would take the trouble to add up these sums, he would find that they come to a total of more than £5,000, or more than £1,000 in excess of the estimated receipts shown on page 9. If the Return was trustworthy and the figures given to the House by the Treasury were correct, then the Estimate must be wrong, and wrong by at least £1,100; and, therefore, the reduction moved should be not £500, but £1,100. Even the larger sum was altogether below what ought

to be realized from these Parks. He did not propose to go over the items mentioned by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green; but in regard to Bushey Park he saw there were receipts for wood and timber of £50, and from other sources £41, although in that Park the enclosed area from which the public were excluded was no less than 104 acres. Those portions of the Park used for meadow land and making hay did not appear to figure on the credit side at all. There were further items of 30 acres for pasture land and 20 acres for meadow land, to say nothing of plantations. There was sufficient property of a profitable kind to secure an income of several hundred pounds, and yet £91 was the entire sum derived from it. With regard to Hampton Court Park, the total amount received was £577, yet the land enclosed amounted to 752 acres, and consisted of very good grazing ground; so that the revenue was altogether too small for the purposes for which the Park was utilized. Then, again, in regard to Regent's Park, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had pointed out the ridiculously low sums for which much of the land—very eligible land—was let. Instead of having a sum of £2,340 derived from that property, it ought to be worth, at least £10,000 or £15,000 a-year. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, in replying, in the first instance, to the hon. Member for Northampton in regard to the enclosures in the Deer Parks at Hampton Court and at Richmond, took very good care to confine his observations to the deer in Richmond Park and the pheasants there. Now, no complaints had been made in regard to pheasants, and no attack was made by the hon. Member for Northampton on the Ranger. That question was fought out several years ago, and in regard to the pheasants he believed that some satisfactory arrangement was made. There remained, however, the Old Deer Park of Richmond, 362 acres in extent, and there were 900 acres elsewhere which were entirely given up to deer. If these Parks were situated away from a large city like London, it would be a matter of very little importance; but the preservation of these open spaces for the use of the people were of great consequence to London, with its population of 5,000,000. He thought

the Government ought to make some arrangement that would secure that the large spaces at Hampton Court, Regent's Park, and Richmond Park, which were now let at inadequate rents for the benefit of a small ring of persons, should, as soon as possible, either be let at full value, or, as he should prefer, be thrown open to the public, so that, in one form or another, the people should reap the full advantage of this valuable land. Hampton Court Park and Richmond Park, from which the public were now largely excluded, were very easy of access to the people of London, and at holiday times would be of the greatest value. As it was, people could only see from a distance the promised land they were never allowed to enter, and yet, although they were excluded from it, the revenue derived from it by the Government was ridiculously small. He was afraid that there was a great deal of jobbery connected with the management of the Parks. There appeared to be a small ring of highly-paid persons who did derive great advantage of one kind or the other from these Parks; but the great bulk of the public derived no advantage at all.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), in referring to the Return which had been given to the House upon his Motion, had asked some questions in reference to Greenwich and Richmond Parks. The hon. Member had asked whether there had been any decrease in the space which was formerly devoted to the enjoyment of the people, and whether the reserve spaces had been enlarged? As far as he had been able to ascertain in the Office of Works, there had been no such decrease, nor had there been any withdrawal from the public of any rights which they had formerly enjoyed. For instance, the Ranger's Lodge at Greenwich, now in the occupation of Lady Mayo, and the reserve spaces around it, had not been in any way increased in modern times, nor in the case of Richmond Park or Hampton Court had there been any withdrawal from the public of rights which they had formerly enjoyed. Hampton Court Park had never been thrown open to the public at any time; but he was rather inclined to agree with the hon. Member that some improvements might be effected in the present arrangements,

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especially in regard to the dead wall. He would promise the hon. Member that he would go into the question, and if he could see his way he would be glad to have that improvement effected. As to the position of the Master of the Horse, he had nothing to do with the deer, nor were the deer in Hampton Court Park under his management. What he had to do there had reference to horses, and he was required to pay for the pasturage which the horses had in the Park. He might say that this subject was under consideration at present, and he hoped that a more satisfactory agreement, as far as the public were concerned, might be made with the Master of the Horse. It was a question, however, which had only been mooted within the last few months. With respect to Regent's Park, to which the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) had called attention, he hoped the hon. Member would admit that, as far as it had been in his power, he had endeavoured to make the Park as available as possible for the use of all classes of the public. As a matter of fact, the Park had only been thrown open within comparatively modern times. For a long time it was not open to the public at all, and it was only in the year 1835 that it was first thrown open. Since then, from time to time, various portions of the Park had been added to those which were originally given to the public. No one would probably desire to interfere with the various societies which occupied parts of the Park. There was one portion, however, occupied by the Toxophilite Society, of which the lease would shortly fall in. The Society was, of course, anxious to have the lease renewed, whereas others desired that their grounds should be added to the part now open to the people. The Government were hampered also by other leases and established private rights with which they could not interfere. In 1883, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was at the Treasury, some additions were made to the spaces available for the public. There was no discrepancy in the figures referred to by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor); but the apparent error arose from the fact that the Return moved for by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) was made not only

from the Office of Works, but from the Department of Woods and Forests.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had confined his quotations to those Parks which were shown in the Return.

MR. PLUNKET said, that a great portion of the argument of the hon. Member was based on the sum of £2,344 18s. 10d., which appeared in the Vote as derivable from Regent's Park; but the whole of that sum, as the hon. Member would find from Sub-head B, had been claimed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, because that part of the Park was under their control. He thought that would reconcile the discrepancy which had been pointed out.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman had referred quite correctly to what was done in 1883, in connection with Regent's Park, and the additions which were then made. When he went to the Treasury he found that a portion of the Park was about to be opened if the claims of some of the residents could be satisfied. He settled that controversy, and, in addition, decided that some of the ground round the villas should be added to the Park. In regard to the lease of the Toxophilite Society, he could only express an earnest hope that when the lease fell in it would not be renewed, but that the land would be made available for the public. It was a great pity that Hampton Court Park was not available for the public. Everyone who went there knew how much the public would appreciate the privilege if they were allowed to use it—that was to say, if the grounds were thrown open to them. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had done much good in several of his concessions to the public, and he (Mr. Childers) trusted that he would go still further in the same direction.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) had joined in the demand that Hampton Court Park should be thrown open to the public. Three hundred acres were taken away from the public in Bushey Park, 75 acres of it being devoted to the maintenance of the cream-coloured horses—which he supposed would be looked upon by the Treasury as essen-

tially "pleasure horses." There were also a number of horses kept in Hampton Court Park, and the land there was let under lease to the Master of the Horse for £280 per annum. It was said that there were a lot of brood mares kept there; but, though he had often asked what became of the foals of the mares, he had never been able to obtain a satisfactory answer. The great point was, however, that these two pieces of land should be thrown open to the public, and that some arrangement should be made by which the cream-coloured horses should be taken elsewhere, and the 75 acres devoted to them thrown open to the public, the lease of the Master of the Horse being terminated. This lease was not one they were bound to maintain as part and parcel of the bargain made with Her Majesty when she came to the Throne. It was open to the Board of Works to refuse to grant the lease. Thousands of holiday makers went down to the Park on Bank Holidays and Sundays. He, himself, had a house near by, and saw the people, and he thought not one of Her Majesty's subjects outside the House would complain if this £280 per annum received from the Master of the Horse were forfeited and this large Park were thrown open to the public. He thought he had been too moderate by only moving to reduce the Vote by £500. He knew, however, that whatever the amount of the reduction moved, whether it were £1,000 or £2,000, it would not be likely to pass; and, therefore, £500 was as good a figure as any other for the purpose of protesting against the system of appointing Rangers and other fancy officers. He should certainly divide the Committee upon the subject.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he thought this was a very useful discussion, and trusted that the land in the Parks referred to would be thrown open to the public. He held that the House would have no real control over matters like those in this Vote until all the Estimates were looked at and examined by a Committee before they were submitted to the whole House. Until that were done hon. Members would not be able to come to a better understanding on these matters. He joined in the hope that Hampton Court Park might before long be thrown open to the public. There was another point

his serious consideration, and see if it were possible to admit the public into Kew Gardens at an earlier hour. Nothing, however, had been done in the matter, and unless some promise were given that a little more attention would be paid to the wish of the public in that direction he (Mr. Cromer) should certainly move to reduce the Vote by £1,000. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee whether he had directed inquiries to be made in this matter; and, if so, what was the result of those inquiries? Another complaint made last Session, and which he (Mr. Cromer) wished to repeat now, was that the public were not allowed to take even the smallest parcel into Kew Gardens. The public were obliged to leave even small handbags at the entrance of the Gardens, lest they might contain anything in the shape of—not explosive matter—but in the shape of food or drink. There seemed to be on the part of officials a fear that the public would regale themselves after they had entered the sacred precincts of the Gardens. It was pointed out last year that there was a part of the Gardens into which the people might be allowed to carry parcels for the purpose of providing themselves with refreshments, and where, if an empty bottle or two, or a few pieces of paper, were left lying about, it would not injure the Gardens or produce an eyesore—he alluded to that part of the Gardens on the bank of the Thames. If the Board of Works could not see their way to allowing the public to make use of this part of the Gardens for refreshment purposes, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government would seriously consider the desirability of erecting in Kew Gardens for the convenience of the poorer classes of their countrymen, some such building as was to be found in Regent's Park. There was a building there which was admirably conducted where refreshments were to be obtained at a very small cost. It seemed to him (Mr. Cromer) that if they had a building of that kind in Kew Gardens it would get over the difficulty to which he alluded. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention had been directed, or whether inquiries had been made first of all in regard to the exclusion of the public from these Gardens up to the late hour

Mr. Cromer

to which he had alluded, and why they could not be admitted at 11 or 12 o'clock in the day? Eleven o'clock was late enough he thought. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would also say whether the public would be allowed to carry parcels into the part of the Gardens to which he had referred; and, if not, whether the Government would not erect there a building in which refreshments might be obtained?

MR. PICKERSGILL said, he should not have risen again except for an answer which just now fell from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. The right hon. Gentleman had seemed to drop some dark hints to the effect that some higher powers were concerned in this question of the admission of the public to Hampton Court Park. He (Mr. Pickersgill) however, submitted that the matter was under the control of the Office of Works. If the right hon. Gentleman would go down to the Park, he would find, from the notice board, that admission to the Park was subject to the Rules and Regulations made under the Parks' Act of 1872. The Regulations there made prescribed that the Park should be open to those who had the licence of the Office of Works. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman had only to extend the licence to the entire public, and the whole thing was done.

MR. PLUNKET said, that as to what had fallen from the hon. Member (Mr. Cromer) with reference to Kew Gardens, he could assure him that since the debate referred to, he had gone very carefully into the questions raised, as he had promised to do; and, as a matter of fact, he would inform the hon. Member that the public were now admitted to the Gardens at 12 o'clock on ordinary days. The reason why they were not admitted earlier was that the public generally—that was to say, the people who came from a distance to see the Gardens—hardly began to arrive until that time; and the only conflict of interest was between the people who lived in the immediate vicinity and the students of botanical science. The Board of Works thought it right that there should be a certain period of the day during which these students should have an opportunity of pursuing their studies in seclusion and quiet. He (Mr. Plunket) did not think

there was any grievance to any extent felt even by the people who lived in the neighbourhood. On Bank Holidays the Gardens were open at 10 o'clock, and, he was glad to say, were largely availed of by the public. The other question the hon. Gentleman had referred to, and which was also spoken of when the Estimates were under consideration last year, was a more difficult one. It had been found in practice that if they once began to allow the public to take provisions into the Gardens, it very greatly interfered with the amenities of the Gardens, and that it required additional care and expense in looking after the place in order to keep it in proper and seemly order. As to the hon. Gentleman's other suggestion, that a refreshment kiosk should be erected, that was undoubtedly a subject well worthy of consideration. The general impression had been that the fewer of those establishments that were set up in the Public Parks the better. However, he would promise to give the matter his careful consideration.

MR. CREMER asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would state to the Committee whether any record was kept of the number of students in botanical science who visited Kew Gardens for the purpose of studying in the early part of the day? Could the right hon. Gentleman inform the Committee as to the number of students who visited the Gardens in the course of a day or a year?

MR. PLUNKET said, he dared say it would be very easy to obtain such a list; but he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the privilege of studying in the Arboretum in Kew Gardens, which was, perhaps, the finest in the world, was highly valued by a large number of students and others.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the number who visit the Gardens on a Sunday morning?

MR. PLUNKET: I can easily find out. I am not sure that any record is kept; but I know that these people go there in considerable numbers.

MR. CREMER asked, whether he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman would take the question of the erection of a refreshment kiosk into his consideration? He (Mr. Cremer) had heard a cheer some time ago when

it was stated that it would be difficult to allow the public any part of Kew Gardens for the purpose of picnics. Well, it might be all very well for hon. Members to object to the public having this privilege when they themselves could drive down to the Gardens in their carriages, take a stroll through the grounds, the hot-house, and the Arboretum, and drive home again to partake of the sumptuous repast there awaiting them. But there was no such luxury for the enormous majority of the visitors to the Gardens. They were poor people, who found it necessary to carry their provisions with them, and it was on behalf of these that he was pleading to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would consider the point which he (Mr. Pickersgill) had raised with reference to Hampton Court Park?

MR. PLUNKET said, he was aware that Hampton Court Park was placed in the Schedule to the Act of 1872; but the Park had never been used by the public.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 95: Majority 42. — (Div. List, No. 56.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £40,940, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that this year a further sum was asked to be voted under Sub-head B, in connection with the Westminster Hall improvements, and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) whether it had been decided for what purpose the new building for which this money was asked for was to be used? In Parliament in 1885 a strong protest was made against the erection of what had appeared to a large number of hon. Members to be an altogether useless building. Before they voted any further money for the building, it was desirable, he thought, that they should

upon which he wished to make some observations—namely, as to the deplorable condition of the trees in Kensington Gardens. A great many of these trees were in a dying state, and a great part of the Gardens was either bare or covered by half-dead trees, a thing which appeared to him as nothing short of a national calamity. He thought it the duty of the Government to get to the bottom of this matter. He was not a scientific man as regarded trees, but he had taken some interest in this matter, and he had made inquiries in reference to the condition of the trees in Kensington Gardens. It was evidently not the air of the Metropolis which poisoned them, because in several neighbouring squares large numbers of trees were growing, and were in a most flourishing condition. He and the Board of Works had set up opposite theories as to the cause of the fatality amongst the Kensington Garden trees. His theory was that the Board of Works had allowed builders in that district, when digging up foundations for new houses, to remove the clay to Kensington Gardens, and place it over the roots of the trees. The theory of the Board of Works was that the trees had suffered from defective drainage, and that great improvement would be observed now that the drainage had been in some degree attended to. He (Sir George Campbell) was convinced that there were large tracts upon which the trees were dying, which never could have been affected by the overflow of water from the pond. He should very much like to know if the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) could tell them if there had been any perceptible improvement in the condition of the trees in consequence of the drainage operations which had been carried out, as he did not himself believe it to be the case. He was under the impression that the trees in those parts were still dying. If the Park were private property, its owner would not be, as the Government were, content to sleep on the matter and allow the thing to drift. He would not allow the Park to continue in such a state, but would take measures to correct any evil which he believed to exist. Nothing had been done to examine the roots of the trees really to find out if the seat of the difficulty lay there. At any rate, he trusted that the right hon.

Sir George Campbell

Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would be able to give them some satisfaction in this matter. He also trusted that something would be settled in regard to the Roehampton Gate of Richmond Park. Richmond Park, as everyone knew, was a magnificent Park, but the access to it was not sufficient, and anything which could be done to improve it would be of enormous benefit to the people of London.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, there had been one very important and striking omission from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. He (Mr. Pickersgill) had asked him why the public were excluded from Hampton Court Park, and in reply the right hon. Gentleman had given them no reason, but had contented himself with the observation that the public never had been admitted. That was not the question. He did not ask whether they had been admitted in the past, and if not what was the reason of their exclusion; but what he asked was, why they were not admitted now? He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would give something like a satisfactory assurance on the matter now, and if he did he (Mr. Pickersgill) for one would not press the subject to a Division.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that as to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) no doubt his complaint as to the state of the trees in Kensington Gardens had for a long time possessed some considerable foundation, and he (Mr. Plunket) regretted it as much as the hon. Member did. The matter was considered some years ago by a small Committee, of whom Mr. Littler, of the Office of Works, was one, Sir James Cooper was another, and a third gentleman whose name he had forgotten, but who, he thought, was connected with the Office of Woods. This Committee went very carefully into the subject of the mortality amongst the trees, and the conclusion they came to was that in the first place the trees had been planted too closely together originally, and that in other respects they had not been well planted. In the next place they came to the conclusion that owing to the saturation of the soil from excess of water a great many trees, as they expressed it, "stood in water." Now, the hon. Member asked him whether the improvements

which had been effected at the Round Pond had been productive of good results. He was afraid they had not produced much good effect in the Garden generally; but he was informed that in the immediate vicinity of the Pond the trees were improving considerably. He feared the evil complained of was one which could not be altogether remedied or overcome; but the Board of Works were doing their best to grapple with it. They were removing some trees in those places where they were overcrowded, and were making some drains, and he believed that would do something to prolong the existence of some of the older trees. Whilst they were doing this they were planting young trees from time to time, and in all such cases they took the greatest possible care that the trees were put in under favourable circumstances for their growth and development. He might illustrate what he meant by saying that the trees in Bird Cage Walk, and in the Mall at St. James's Park, had undoubtedly suffered from the great carelessness with which they were originally planted. They were continually planting new trees in those places, and whenever they did so they made every provision to increase the chances of the trees growing well. They only chose trees of the best kind, and had them planted under the best scientific conditions. He could assure the hon. Member that it was not because the Board of Works had not very carefully considered the question that they had not been successful in putting a stop to the mortality amongst the trees in Kensington Gardens. He was afraid there was not much to be hoped for in regard to the older trees; but he thought that the trees they were now planting—together with such as could be rescued of the old ones—would benefit by the more careful treatment they were now receiving. As to the question regarding Hampton Court Park, he could add nothing to what he had already said. It had always been reserved, and it must be remembered that it was situated in the centre of a great deal of open space which was available for the public. He had said already that the matter was now being considered, but he could not give hon. Members any pledge as to what would be done as the result of that consideration.

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SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the trees in Kensington Gardens; but he did not think the evil to which he had referred arose from the cause pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman. Having watched for a long time the decay of the trees, whether they were young or old, and whether originally overcrowded or not, and having heard from some people that the only possible theory to account for that was the super-saturation of the soil with moisture to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, he (Sir George Campbell) gathered that the real cause of the mischief had not yet been ascertained, and that there was still something to be found out. He acknowledged that the authorities the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned as having formed a Committee were very high authorities from a scientific point of view; but, at the same time, he could not help observing that these gentlemen did not seem to have mastered the whole difficulty, and he hoped experts would still continue to give attention to the subject.

MR. CHILDERS said, that one expression had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works on which he thought he might ask for some further explanation. The right hon. Gentleman had said that Hampton Court Park had been "reserved" from the public. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean that it had been legally reserved from the public, and that it was not in the power of the Office of Works, in conjunction with the Treasury, to make arrangements for the public to use the Park? He (Mr. Childers) was under the impression that there was no such legal reservation, and that it was purely a matter for the Office of Works. If that were so, "reservation" was hardly the word to use, and he hoped they would see the land given up for the use of the public.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to the fact that last year objection was taken to this Vote on the ground that the public were excluded from Kew Gardens until 1 or 2 o'clock in the day. The right hon. Gentleman had then promised to take the protest which was made into

his serious consideration, and see if it were possible to admit the public into Kew Gardens at an earlier hour. Nothing, however, had been done in the matter, and unless some promise were given that a little more attention would be paid to the wish of the public in that direction he (Mr. Cremer) should certainly move to reduce the Vote by £1,000. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee whether he had directed inquiries to be made in this matter; and, if so, what was the result of those inquiries? Another complaint made last Session, and which he (Mr. Cremer) wished to repeat now, was that the public were not allowed to take even the smallest parcel into Kew Gardens. The public were obliged to leave even small handbags at the entrance of the Gardens, lest they might contain anything in the shape of—not explosive matter—but in the shape of food or drink. There seemed to be on the part of officials a fear that the public would regale themselves after they had entered the sacred precincts of the Gardens. It was pointed out last year that there was a part of the Gardens into which the people might be allowed to carry parcels for the purpose of providing themselves with refreshments, and where, if an empty bottle or two, or a few pieces of paper, were left lying about, it would not injure the Gardens or produce an eyesore—he alluded to that part of the Gardens on the bank of the Thames. If the Board of Works could not see their way to allowing the public to make use of this part of the Gardens for refreshment purposes, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government would seriously consider the desirability of erecting in Kew Gardens for the convenience of the poorer classes of their countrymen, some such building as was to be found in Regent's Park. There was a building there which was admirably conducted where refreshments were to be obtained at a very small cost. It seemed to him (Mr. Cremer) that if they had a building of that kind in Kew Gardens it would get over the difficulty to which he alluded. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention had been directed, or whether inquiries had been made first of all in regard to the exclusion of the public from these Gardens up to the late hour

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to which he had alluded, and why they could not be admitted at 11 or 12 o'clock in the day? Eleven o'clock was late enough he thought. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would also say whether the public would be allowed to carry parcels into the part of the Gardens to which he had referred; and, if not, whether the Government would not erect there a building in which refreshments might be obtained?

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he should not have risen again except for an answer which just now fell from the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works. The right hon. Gentleman had seemed to drop some dark hints to the effect that some higher powers were concerned in this question of the admission of the public to Hampton Court Park. He (Mr. Pickersgill) however, submitted that the matter was under the control of the Office of Works. If the right hon. Gentleman would go down to the Park, he would find, from the notice board, that admission to the Park was subject to the Rules and Regulations made under the Parks' Act of 1873. The Regulations there made prescribed that the Park should be open to those who had the licence of the Office of Works. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman had only to extend the licence to the entire public, and the whole thing was done.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that as to what had fallen from the hon. Member (Mr. Cremer) with reference to Kew Gardens, he could assure him that since the debate referred to, he had gone very carefully into the questions raised, as he had promised to do; and, as a matter of fact, he would inform the hon. Member that the public were now admitted to the Gardens at 12 o'clock on ordinary days. The reason why they were not admitted earlier was that the public generally—that was to say, the people who came from a distance to see the Gardens—hardly began to arrive until that time; and the only conflict of interest was between the people who lived in the immediate vicinity and the students of botanical science. The Board of Works thought it right that there should be a certain period of the day during which these students should have an opportunity of pursuing their studies in seclusion and quiet. He (Mr. Plunket) did not think

there was any grievance to any extent felt even by the people who lived in the neighbourhood. On Bank Holidays the Gardens were open at 10 o'clock, and, he was glad to say, were largely availed of by the public. The other question the hon. Gentleman had referred to, and which was also spoken of when the Estimates were under consideration last year, was a more difficult one. It had been found in practice that if they once began to allow the public to take provisions into the Gardens, it very greatly interfered with the amenities of the Gardens, and that it required additional care and expense in looking after the place in order to keep it in proper and seemly order. As to the hon. Gentleman's other suggestion, that a refreshment kiosk should be erected, that was undoubtedly a subject well worthy of consideration. The general impression had been that the fewer of those establishments that were set up in the Public Parks the better. However, he would promise to give the matter his careful consideration.

MR. CREMER asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would state to the Committee whether any record was kept of the number of students in botanical science who visited Kew Gardens for the purpose of studying in the early part of the day? Could the right hon. Gentleman inform the Committee as to the number of students who visited the Gardens in the course of a day or a year?

MR. PLUNKET said, he dared say it would be very easy to obtain such a list; but he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the privilege of studying in the Arboretum in Kew Gardens, which was, perhaps, the finest in the world, was highly valued by a large number of students and others.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state the number who visit the Gardens on a Sunday morning?

MR. PLUNKET: I can easily find out. I am not sure that any record is kept; but I know that these people go there in considerable numbers.

MR. CREMER asked, whether he was to understand that the right hon. Gentleman would take the question of the erection of a refreshment kiosk into his consideration? He had heard a

it was stated that it would be difficult to allow the public any part of Kew Gardens for the purpose of picnics. Well, it might be all very well for hon. Members to object to the public having this privilege when they themselves could drive down to the Gardens in their carriages, take a stroll through the grounds, the hot-house, and the Arboretum, and drive home again to partake of the sumptuous repast there awaiting them. But there was no such luxury for the enormous majority of the visitors to the Gardens. They were poor people, who found it necessary to carry their provisions with them, and it was on behalf of these that he was pleading to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would consider the point which he (Mr. Pickersgill) had raised with reference to Hampton Court Park?

MR. PLUNKET said, he was aware that Hampton Court Park was placed in the Schedule to the Act of 1872; but the Park had never been used by the public.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 53; Noes 95: Majority 42. — (Div. List, No. 56.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £40,940, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Buildings of the Houses of Parliament."

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that this year a further sum was asked to be voted under Sub-head B, in connection with the Westminster Hall improvements, and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) whether it had been decided for what purpose the new building for which this money was asked for was to be used? In Parliament in 1885 a strong protest was made against the erection of what had appeared to a large number of hon. Members to be an altogether useless building. Before they voted any money for the building, it was thought, that they should

know for what purpose it was to be used. To his mind, this was a useless expenditure, a waste of public money. Many hon. Members had prophesied that in all probability the time was not far distant when the building would have to be pulled down to make way for some more suitable erection. If the money were voted to-day, he should like to have some information from the Government as to when it was likely that the building would be completed?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman did not allude to Westminster Hall, when he spoke about the prophesy that this building would have to be pulled down, because he (Sir George Campbell) thought that one of the most admirable buildings in all Europe. No doubt that magnificent building would be, to a large extent, spoiled by the so-called "restoration" now going on on its western side. A great architect, under the name of "restoration," had been allowed to have his own way with it in carrying out some gim-crack ideas of his own. They were told that when the new building was completed they would get a new Grand Committee Room; but it did not now appear that they were likely to get all he would like. They were also told that there would be another practical purpose effected—namely, that hon. Members would get a shed in which to put their horses; but he did not see that that expectation was likely to be realized. At any rate, he should like to have some information on these points. He should also like to be told to what use Westminster Hall—which was the finest hall in Europe—would be turned when these building operations were finished? At the present moment the Hall was turned to no account at all. He (Sir George Campbell) wished to see it made the centre of their Parliamentary life. He wished to see it made the centre of a great many Grand Committee Rooms, and a centre of life as it used to be when the Royal Courts of Justice were held there. He hoped they would be told that these building operations would not continue very much longer, and that the House would soon know the worst of them.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) said, he should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gen-

Mr. Causton

tleman the First Commissioner of Works to a point of some practical importance, and that was the very inadequate accommodation which there was for smoking in that House. There was, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, but one room downstairs for smoking and one upstairs; and if the right hon. Gentleman ever visited those chambers at a time when there was a full attendance he would see that they were hardly fit for human occupation. The right hon. Gentleman had been very kind to his Colleagues. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) had not been able to visit the new chambers prepared for them; but he was told that almost every Member of the Ministry had a chamber to himself in which he could do almost anything he liked—in which he could even smoke if he chose. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) would venture to make a suggestion which was not a new one by any means, but one which had been brought before one of the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessors, and had been approved of by nearly every Member of the House who had considered it, and that suggestion was that the Office of Works should cover over either a portion or the whole of the centre enclosure of St. Stephen's Cloisters surrounding that part of the building now used as a Cloak Room, and that it should become a Smoking Room. There might be seats placed there, and so forth, and the alteration would be found to be a great convenience to hon. Members, especially to those who came in smoking a very good cigar and did not wish to throw it away. And, as a matter of fact, this Cloister was habitually every day used by hon. Members as a Smoking Room. If the right hon. Gentleman chose to visit it when an important Division was about to be called, he would find that there was always a large smoking company assembled there at that end of the East Cloister. A Predecessor of his right hon. Friend now in Office had had that proposal brought before him and had not disapproved of it; in fact, he had given a qualified approval of it, and had said that he had referred it to the officers of his Department, who, after consultation, had come to the conclusion that the cost would be too great. They had declared that the cost would be thousands of pounds; but he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) did not agree with that view.

He perceived that the right hon. Gentleman had afforded protection to hon. Members who drove down to the House in their carriages by constructing a glass and iron awning overhead, and he observed that that awning had cost only £300. Well, that being so, he did not think it was possible to say that the plan he was now suggesting would cost thousands of pounds. He did not think that the expense of carrying out his proposal would approximate to the sum which had been mentioned to his right hon. Friend's Predecessor. He thought that a few hundreds of pounds might be sufficient to carry out a tentative scheme in a convenient and inexpensive manner. He (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) ventured to put this matter before the right hon. Gentleman in the hope that he would kindly take it into his consideration, and that if next year he had the honour to hold the Office which he now filled in such a distinguished manner, and which it was to be hoped he would continue to hold, he would be able to carry out this or some similar plan. There was only one other point to which he (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) wished to refer—namely, the additions to Westminster Hall, to which reference had been made by the two hon. Members who had spoken from the other side of the House. He quite concurred in the condemnation which they had expressed. Before the work which was now being carried out was commenced he had protested against it; but all that was over and done with now. The plan had been accepted, the work had been carried out, and was now near its completion. They were indebted for this great disfigurement of a noble building to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, who was First Commissioner of Works belonging to the political Party with which hon. Gentlemen opposite were connected. Those hon. Gentlemen did not protest at the time, and did not turn the then First Commissioner of Works out of Office, and they must be prepared to accept the consequences—it was no use discussing the matter now.

MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northampton, Mid) asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works if he had considered the question of the windows of the House—a question which

he had put to the right hon. Gentleman the other day? As the summer was coming on, it was rather important that they should have arrangements made by which, when the windows of the House were open hon. Members sitting below them, would be saved from draughts.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he wished to call attention to the serious condition of the frescoes in the House which had been painted by eminent artists. He would draw attention in particular to those frescoes occupying the passage upstairs leading to the Committee Rooms. They were simply dropping from the walls; and what he wanted to know was whether, if they could not be restored in some way or other, it would not be as well to remove them altogether? The two great frescoes by Maclise in the House of Lords were also getting into a bad condition. The silica in those pictures was beginning to effloresce, and a crustaceous bloom was gathering and would in time completely destroy the pictures. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works whether something could not be done to check the process of decay which was threatening the destruction of some of the most valuable pictures of our English school?

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he must move to reduce this Vote by the sum of £5,000 by way of protest against the continuance of a state of things to which he had directed the attention of the Government last year, and on which he had made remarks on two or three previous occasions. First of all, he must join with hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House in entering an emphatic protest against the building which was being erected outside Westminster Hall, and which, so far as he (Mr. Cremer) was capable of judging, was of a most hideous character when viewed from the Bridge Street standpoint. He was astonished at any Government sanctioning a structure of that character. And now, in regard to the £5,000 which he was moving, he wished to say that he had called the attention of the Government last year to the fact that there was a most objectionable system of dual control adopted in connection with this House and other Government establish-

ments. A portion of the *employés* were paid directly by the Government, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to state for the information of the House what portion of the item under the head "Maintenance and Repairs, £8,655," was paid to the contractor, and what portion was paid to the *employés* direct? He had never yet been able to understand why any portion of the workmen about this building were employed by a contractor who was permitted to deduct from their scanty wages 1*d.* per hour. He (Mr. Cremer) had been very much astonished when he heard that this state of things existed here and in other Government buildings, and last year he had called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to the matter, and the right hon. Gentleman had promised to take it into his serious consideration, and to ascertain whether, when the contract with the contractor expired, it would be possible to place the workmen here and in other Government buildings on the same footing as the well-paid officials. The only answer which was vouchsafed or explanation tendered was that the contractors, in consideration of being allowed to make this deduction from the wages of the men—wages which were small enough in themselves, before anything was deducted from them, being only 5*d.* or 6*d.* an hour—supplied certain plant, such as brushes, dusters, steps, and trestles, things which could be obtained for £5 or £6 a-year. That was not a sufficient plea for permitting deductions to be made from the wages of the men, which reduced those wages to an amount which was scarcely sufficient to enable those who received them to live in anything like a decent manner. It was, to his mind, an unfortunate thing that they should have two classes of men about the building. It would be better that the men should be employed directly and paid directly by the Government than that a third party should be allowed to intervene, and that the Government should have no control over some of the workpeople. If he was rightly informed, the contract with the contractor expired since he brought the matter forward and received the right hon. Gentleman's promise, and that another contract had been entered into

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for three or four years, and that for that period these workmen were to continue to be robbed of a portion of their wages. As a protest against this state of things, and on behalf of the poorer class of *employés*, in that House and other Government buildings, he proposed that the Vote be reduced by £5,000; and when the Vote for the British Museum and the Votes for other buildings came before them, he should move similar reductions, in order, if possible, to get justice done to the poorer class of their countrymen employed in those places. If it was right that the poorer class of workpeople should have reductions of 1*d.* per hour made from their wages, it was only right that similar reductions should be made from the wages of the higher officials. Until the whole body of *employés* was put on the same footing, whether rich or poor, he should continue to make these protests.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £35,940, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Cremer.)

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would be successful in his endeavour to see that the small pittance given to the humblest persons employed in this House was really received by them, and that no portion of it was taken away by the middleman. He (Mr. Labouchere) rose more to express his dissent from some observations which had fallen from the right hon. Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck)—

THE CHAIRMAN: As a reduction has been moved as to a specific item, that item must be disposed of first. Afterwards, the hon. Member will be able to refer to any other portion of the Vote.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, he did not know whether the Chairman's ruling was that the present debate was entirely confined to the subject by the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer).

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; that is so.

MR. PLUNKET said, the truth was that practically the whole amount for the repairs of the House was paid over to the contractors—Messrs. Mowlem, Burt, & Freeman. These contrac-

tors executed for them their repairs in this and other public buildings, and as regarded the particular charge referred to it was a matter of business arrangement between the contractors and their *employés*—the Government knowing nothing whatever of the way in which the former paid their men. The Government paid the contractors a certain sum, for which sum the work was contracted for; and having paid that—and this was a much more economical way of managing the business than doing the work themselves—they could not go to the contractor and say—“You are to pay your men so much,” or—“You should increase their pay,” or—“Reduce their pay,” and so on. All that it was necessary to leave to ordinary laws of demand and supply, and they must leave it to the contractor to deal with the men as he thought best whom he had engaged to work for him. As he (Mr. Plunket) had said, there was no doubt in the world that in a great many cases this system of employing contractors was the most economical for carrying out the maintenance and repairs of the Houses of Parliament and the whole of the Palace of Westminster and the other buildings the hon. Member had referred to. He was afraid he must take his stand on that view of the case, and say that the system adopted was the most economical one in view of the work to be carried out, and that it was not in the power of the Board of Works to interfere between the contractor and his men. He was sure that the hon. Gentleman himself would see that the only alternative which would be open to them, supposing the arguments which were brought against the Vote were established, would be to undertake the work themselves.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had not quite met the points raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). What his hon. Friend evidently meant was that the Government let their work at prices, and under conditions and terms, which made it impossible for the contractor to pay the current wages in the respective trades. He understood the Government had recently let a contract to a very efficient firm, so far as work was concerned, for the repair of Government buildings during the next

three or four years. What he gathered from the terms of the contract was that the firm had undertaken to do the work at a scheduled price, at so much per hour. Now, the scheduled price mentioned was but little over the wage that should be paid to the workman himself, and the contractor undertook to take a given amount per cent off the contract price. That being so, it was evident that the percentage below the ordinary scheduled price must come out of the wages of the workpeople. To give an example, let him take the case of the trade with which he was closely acquainted. He noticed there was an item of £1,000 for the repair of the stonework of the Houses of Parliament; and he presumed that the contractor contracted to do the work, say at 10*d.* per hour, and that he gave so much percentage off for the privilege of having the work. The result of all this must be that the stonemason employed about the building in repairing would receive $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* or 1*d.* less per hour than they would if employed by private firms on other work. The charge he (Mr. Broadhurst) and his hon. Friends made was that by this system the Government was in reality a party to the “sweating” process, because they let their work at prices and under conditions which made it impossible for a contractor to pay the proper wage, and observe the proper rules of the respective trades. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had said that it was the most economical plan for the Government to let work to contractors. That might be so, and might be a means, of relieving the Office of Works of a certain amount of labour and of some anxiety; but there was no good and sufficient reason, either from an economical point of view or from any other point of view, why the Government should not do its own work in the matter of repairs. He noticed there was an item for the Clerk of the Works’ wages. There was a Clerk of the Works attached to the Office of Works; such a man was the general supervisor of the Government works, and all that was required was the engagement of a foreman practically acquainted with the respective branches of repairs to be done, who would purchase the material wanted, and then the Government could pay the current wages to the workpeople. Some little labour would be entailed upon the

Office of Works, but there was no real difficulty in the matter. The Government were charged with the expenditure of the people's money, and they ought not, when engaging people to do a work, to be parties to a system which resulted in the reduction of the wages of many skilled artisans engaged in the different branches of the work to the extent of 1*d.* or 1½*d.* per hour. This was the point he was sure his hon. Friend (Mr. Cremer) was wishing to enforce, and it was a point which would be complained of so long as work on Government buildings was compelled to be done at a less wage than was paid in the trade generally.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that, no doubt, there was much in what his hon. Friend the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) had just said; but he did not think the hon. Gentleman had quite caught the point raised by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). The real point was that the Clerk of the Works engaged a certain number of men employed about the House; but, instead of engaging all the men, he obtained a few through a contractor. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not complain of the contractor; the contractor naturally took something for his labour, and this came out of the wages of the men. The men had spoken to him (Mr. Labouchere) upon this subject, and therefore he was able to speak definitely as to the complaint which was made. It was not a very important point to anybody except the men themselves; but they undoubtedly felt the grievance very keenly. It certainly was only reasonable that the Clerk of the Works should engage all the men employed, and that was the point which his hon. Friend (Mr. Cremer) wished to raise.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, he was afraid he could not add much to the argument he had already submitted to the Committee; but he must point out that the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) went to the root of competition. The Government were satisfied that it would be far more expensive for them to do the work themselves. For instance, directly they did so they would have applications for sick leave and for pensions which would assuredly be made under such circumstances.

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Being satisfied that that would be a much more expensive way of doing the work than employing a contractor, he repeated that they had no option but to put up the contract to competition. Having satisfied themselves, as they had done, that the firm who obtained the contract was respectable and solvent they must leave the firm to deal with its own *employés*. It was quite true that some men were employed directly by the Office of Works for special services; but that employment was restricted as far as possible, because they were satisfied that it was a cheaper, and a more economical, and a better way to have work done by contractors. They would regret exceedingly if the contractor took any advantage of his workmen and screwed down their wages improperly; but, as he had already said, they could only take precautions against such a condition of things by making contracts with respectable firms. Beyond that he was afraid they could not go. If there were any unfair conditions in the employment the question must be settled between the contractor and the people employed.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had even now answered the point raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer). He was much surprised at the remark of the hon. Member for Nottingham, and thought there was no doubt that work could be done much more cheaply by contract than by the Government; but that was not the question raised by the hon. Gentleman. He (Sir John Lubbock) did not wish to press for a further answer now; but if the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to give it, perhaps he would undertake to look into the matter, and go further into it when the question came again before the House.

MR. CREMER said, he was afraid that he could not accept such a vague promise as satisfactory, because something more than a hint was given last year that this matter would be enquired into; and, if he was rightly informed, the contract had been renewed since last year. He did not complain of the contractor. It was very natural the contractor should seek to recoup himself by making reductions in the wages; but what he did was to blame the Govern-

ment for allowing the system to continue. The tendency of the age was to get rid of middlemen, and to prevent working men having deductions made from their wages, and yet they had the Government countenancing the very system which had been condemned almost universally, not only among the working classes of this country, but of every other country. If there was any advantage in the employment of a contractor the system should be adopted all round. He did not see why they should have any men employed upon this or any other Government building who were engaged through contractors. Why should the principle be confined to the poorer class of working men; why should it not extend to the wealthier office holders? He should continue to enter his protest against the present state of things, and as the only effectual way of doing so was to move a reduction he was afraid he must persist in his Motion.

MR. PLUNKET apologized for not having quite caught the point raised by the hon. Gentleman. He did not think that the question was raised in the same way last year as now; but certainly he would undertake to inquire into the matter and see how it really stood, and if there was any injustice to have it put right.

MR. CREMER said, he had such faith in the right hon. Gentleman's sense of justice that he would accept the pledge given to the Committee and withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. PLUNKET said, that before the Amendment was proposed certain questions were asked him by hon. Members which he desired to reply to as briefly as he could. In the first place, the old argument was glanced at as to the propriety of what was called the restoration of Westminster Hall. As to the new buildings which had been built outside Westminster Hall in place of the Law Courts, if he were disposed to shelter himself behind the authority of Parliament, he might say that the work had been done as the result of the Report of a very strong Committee which sat in 1885; and the Report of that Committee, after being criticized as all matters of Art were liable

to be criticized, was finally approved by the House. He was asked how soon they were to know the worst. There was no worst about it. He was very glad to know that hon. Members would very soon know the best of it, because by the end of this or the beginning of next year the work would be completed. Speaking for himself and for persons of authority whom he had been able to consult, he should say that the result would exceed the expectations of those who were in favour of the plans which had been carried out. He believed that the buildings would be a very stately and handsome addition to Westminster Hall. He believed they would be thoroughly in character with the old Hall, and that they would, as a work of Art, be considered on all hands to be a great success and triumph. He might mention one interesting circumstance as illustrating the fidelity with which Mr. Pearson had endeavoured to restore the Hall and its surroundings to what existed formerly. The staircase by which it was proposed that access should be given to the new buildings from Westminster Hall was greatly criticized some time ago, and Questions were asked of him in the House as to whether the Government were going to consent to such a disfigurement of the old Hall? The answer he then gave was that it was only proposed to reinstate a staircase which it was believed had existed in the old Hall. When the workmen in the course of their labours proceeded to break the hole through the wall to make the access from the Hall to the new buildings, they absolutely found the opening for a staircase which had been filled up. He believed that a great deal of other criticisms urged against Mr. Pearson's plan would fall to the ground as it had done in this particular instance. He was asked some practical questions. For instance, he was asked whether there would be a Committee Room or anything worth having at all? As a matter of fact, there would be an extremely handsome room there, a very large room and one capable of accommodating a Grand Committee. He had not measured it; but he believed it would be as large as any room now employed for the purposes of Grand Committees. He was sure that when the work was complete it would be found not only architecturally a great success,

but would add a large and valuable space to their overcrowded premises. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) had questioned him about the frescoes. He was afraid that some of the frescoes were unfortunately gone past redemption; but he had asked an officer of his Department to go very carefully into the matter, and see what was still capable of being preserved, and to estimate the expense of the preservation if it was possible. Then came the most vexed of all questions, that of additional accommodation for smokers. It was one with which he personally felt great sympathy; but he could only say, in answer to his right hon. Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), that the proposal he had made came to him for the first time. As he understood the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, it was that glass should be placed over the Cloisters outside, or rather in the square along the sides of which the Members' Cloak Room runs. He (Mr. Plunket) would find out what the expense would be, and he would also sound the opinion of the House generally upon the subject; but he was inclined to think that, besides being very expensive, judging from the glass covering which had been put up in the Members' Courtyard, it would hardly be satisfactory unless they covered in the whole Courtyard referred to by the right hon. Member with glass. The hon. Member for Mid Northamptonshire (Mr. C. R. Spencer) had spoken about the opening of the windows so as to avoid the draughts which sometimes descended upon Members, especially those who sat upon the Front Benches. The system of ventilation in the House was an artificial one; in hot weather cold air was sent from underneath the floor. In hot weather it was, first of all, passed over blocks of ice in the regions below; and if Members would have a little faith, and if the windows were allowed to remain shut altogether, the House would be found much cooler than if they were open. He had, however, asked for a report from the gentleman charged with the ventilation of the House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought there was a great deal too much artificial air in the House. Certainly God's air was preferable to the air artificially created. As to the alterations in

Mr. Plunket

Westminster Hall, there was no use in crying over spilt milk; the money voted was gone. He was glad, however, to hear from the right hon. Gentleman that, even if the architecture was defective, they were to have one Committee Room. He could not help thinking that the site ought to have been used for the creation of a number of large Committee Rooms; in which case they might have had the physical or material means of dividing the House, and Westminster Hall itself might have been turned to great account. Situated, as it would have been then, between the House of Commons and the Committee Rooms, Westminster Hall might very properly have been regarded as a centre of the political life of the nation.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) that the facilities for smoking in the House of Commons were quite inadequate. The right hon. Gentleman proposed that they should have an additional Smoking Room below. By all means let them have it, but also let them have a fair and reasonable Smoking Room on this floor. That certainly they had not got at the present moment. The Committee would remember that originally they had a Smoking Room which was still used for Members and Strangers down below. They thought it would be desirable to have one nearer to this Chamber, and it was proposed that they should be given the Tea Room. The Tea Room would have been given up to smoking had it not been for the late Mr. Beresford Hope, who objected to the conversion. That right hon. Gentleman said he sometimes went into the Reading Room, and there was such respect for him that a good deal of attention was paid to his objection, and it was agreed that the Tea Room should not be touched. Last Session, however, a second Smoking Room was obtained from the House of Lords. The House of Lords did not use the room, and, with a spirit which he could only respectfully qualify as a "dog in the manger" spirit, the House of Lords had deprived them of the room in question, and now they were driven back to the temporary room which was given to them while some other arrangement was made. This, he thought, ought to be taken into consideration by the right hon. Gentle-

man the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). Either they ought to have the Tea Room, which was a very large room, and the tea people sent to the present Smoking Room, or some other arrangement should be made. He did not care where the room was got, but in time a crushed worm would turn. It was recognized that in every public assembly smokers had their rights. He could assure the Chairman that if they had proper Smoking Room accommodation it would lead very much to the peace and quiet of the House. There were a great many Members who felt soothed if, during a debate, they could indulge in tobacco smoking; he (Mr. Labouchere) always returned to the House in a calmer and more agreeable spirit after a cigar, and he was sure there were a great many Members in the same position as himself. He believed that if they had really good Smoking Rooms attached to the building the debates would be so much shortened that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) would hardly ever have to move the Closure. Was it not perfectly preposterous that they should go on year after year spending money in tinkering up this Assembly, and yet that there should be only room for about one-third of the Members? It had been suggested that there should be a new Chamber; Committees had sat upon the subject. He had looked over the Reports of the Committees; but he had not found that any single architect had ever suggested a plan by which every Member should have a seat on the floor of the House. The House had changed very much of late years; Members attended to the Business far more than they formerly did, and now that the hours were shortened they would attend even more regularly. At present, when there was a great debate expected, there was great hurrying and scurrying on the part of private Members to obtain seats. Private Members got no sympathy whatever from the occupants of either of the Front Benches. Those Gentlemen had their seats reserved for them; they did not come down to prayers. He had to come down to prayers every day. It might be said that it was a good thing to pray; but none of the Ministers and ex-Ministers ever thought of attending prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Oh, oh!]

He did not think there was a single Member of either of the Front Benches who attended prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Oh, oh!] The right hon. Gentleman evidently did pray, but he was the only Member of the Front Bench who did. No Ministers ever came down to prayers. [Mr. MUNDELLA: Yes; they do.] As a matter of fact, how many times in the course of the Session did the right hon. Gentleman himself come down to pray? He had not had the advantage of praying with the right hon. Gentleman. He appealed to any private Member of the House whether it was not a fact that during prayers the two Front Benches were entirely empty? He only said that to prove that Members were obliged to come down to prayers solely in order to obtain a seat. At present the House met at 3 o'clock, an hour earlier than formerly; many Members were engaged in business, and often, if they knew they would be able to get a seat, they would not come down, say, till half-past 4, when Business would be practically under weigh. The obligation imposed upon a Member to come down at 3 o'clock greatly encroached upon his business day. With all respect to the architects, he asserted that there was nothing easier than to make a Chamber, not much larger than the present Chamber, which would give a place to everyone. Architects were the bane of business assemblies. He admired the late Mr. Ayrton for many things; but he admired his Post Office more than anything else. When he built the Post Office, he called together a number of architects and other people, men of science and of æsthetic tastes, and he said—"You have Greek architecture, and Roman architecture, and Gothic architecture; but this is neither Greek, nor Roman, nor Gothic—this is the Post Office, and this is Post Office architecture." If they could only get House of Commons' architecture applied to the House, he (Mr. Labouchere) was certain that, without making the House very much larger, without destroying its acoustic properties, they could make it sufficiently large to give every Member a seat. He asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) whether he was prepared to agree to a Committee to look into the matter? The question was one which concerned a great number of Members,

and they were anxious to have the matter discussed, and know clearly and definitely, firstly, whether it was possible to make a House, as he asserted, not very much larger than the present one, capable of accommodating all the Members; and, secondly, whether it would be possible to do this without very much expenditure?

MR. PLUNKET said, that he should be very glad to promote, as far as he could, the comfort of the smokers. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Committee Room which they had last year did not belong to the House of Commons at all, but to the House of Lords. It was clearly understood last year that the Committee Room was only a loan to them; the House of Lords very willingly gave them the use of the room, because it was not wanted for Committee purposes. The use of the room by smokers depended very much on the state of the Committee Business of the House of Lords, and he would make inquiries whether it was possible to have the advantage of the Committee Room again as a Smoking Room.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Has it ever been used as a Committee Room?

MR. PLUNKET said, it had been so used ordinarily; it would be quite impossible for the Committee Business of the House of Lords to be carried on without the room being in almost constant employment; but last year there was not much Business for the Committees of the House of Lords, and they were able to let the House of Commons have the use of the room. He would renew the application for the room this year, and he was quite sure the House of Lords would meet them fairly in the matter. As to the reconstruction of the Chamber in which they sat, he certainly could not give the pledge the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) asked for. He did not wish to prejudice the hon. Gentleman's proposal by expressing an opinion adverse to it; but the proposal ought to be made after Notice, and to be decided by a full House. It was a very serious proposal, and would involve the expenditure of a considerable sum of money. Still, he did not desire to prejudice the question at all. If the hon. Member would place it on the

Notice Paper, the whole matter might be thoroughly discussed.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, that an hon. Friend had assured him that the House could be made equal to all the demands upon it by such a small change as moving it back 20 feet on the Ministerial side. There was no doubt that the present state of affairs was very inconvenient. A good many business men found it impossible to be down at 3 o'clock in the day, and it was rather absurd to bring men down at such an early hour merely for the purpose of obtaining a seat. He desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) what had been done in regard to the matter to which he called attention some time ago—the matter of intercommunication between different parts of the House? He had often pointed out the extraordinary fact that one could learn in an office in Fleet Street more of what was going on in the House of Commons than he could in the Smoking Room, or in the Library of the House itself. If one was in the Smoking Room, a place which he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) rarely frequented, he was absolutely ignorant as to what was going on in the House; but if he were in *The Times* or *The Standard* office in the City, he could, by putting his ear to the telephone, know what was going on in the House. There were many ways by which that state of things could be remedied. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) gave an undertaking some time ago that he would look into the matter, and had since led them to believe that he had succeeded in devising a plan. If he had, the result had not been seen. Could there be any arrangement made by which the telephone would be a little more accessible to Members than it was at present? He could not see why the telephone should not be brought up to some place in the Lobby, instead of being located opposite the Cloak Room. There was another point he desired to raise, and it was with reference to the accommodation of the Press in the House. At present, if a new newspaper was started it was impossible for its representative either to find a place in the Reporters' Gallery or to gain admission to the Lobby. Everybody knew that the public took a great deal of interest in the affairs of the House of Commons, which,

Mr. Labouchere

to a certain extent, was the nerve centre of all political affairs in the country. The present system was this—that one could not now get into the Reporters' Gallery because it was full, and he could not get into the Lobby because he could not get into the Reporters' Gallery. No one was allowed to have a ticket for the Lobby who had not a ticket for the Reporters' Gallery. On a previous occasion he had mentioned the case of *The Scottish Leader*, but he believed that that had been remedied since. *The Scottish Leader* wanted to get a place in the Gallery, but the paper was told that the Gallery was full. Then the paper said—"Will you let our representative into the Lobby in order that he may be able to confer with Scottish Members?" The reply given was that the representative of *The Scottish Leader* could not get admission into the Lobby for the reason that no one was allowed in the Lobby who had not a ticket for the Reporters' Gallery. That newspaper was placed at a considerable disadvantage as compared with other newspapers by such a regulation. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make representations to the proper quarters in order to have that state of things remedied. The Reporters' Gallery was far too small, and ought to be enlarged as well as the House itself. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had not decidedly negatived the proposal of the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); because it really did seem almost too grotesque that, year after year, they should all agree that the House was too small for the accommodation of its Members, and yet that they should do nothing to remedy the evil. That was the one Legislative Assembly in the world that had not accommodation for all its Members. If they went to the House of Representatives at Washington they found that every Member had his own desk; the seats were given out at the beginning of the year, and were allotted by ballot. The same thing occurred in the State Legislatures of every American State; even in the small State of Connecticut the same state of things prevailed in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. He was bound to say he would not like to see the American plan adopted here, because the provision of desks enabling Members to write was destruc-

tive of proper attention to the Business of the House. He thought that in some respects they had an ideal system here in having Members seated beside each other with no place to put their papers, and no place at which to write. But between that and having seat accommodation for every Member of the House there was a very great difference. He had often said that he did not know any place in the world where the means of communication between the different parts were so bad as they were in the House of Commons. Formerly, if a Member wanted to go to the Ladies' Gallery he was allowed to do so by the door at the back of the House. That, however, had now been done away with. He presumed that the Whips complained that Members were able to escape their vigilant eye by means of the back door; but if there was no objection now on the part of the Whips, he thought it would be advantageous to revert to the old plan, because one could then get to the Ladies' Gallery in about half the time he now could.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he did not think that Members were agreed that the House was too small. On the contrary, as far as experience went, the House was a very convenient size for the transaction of its ordinary Business. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had alluded to other Legislative Assemblies. He (Mr. Addison) was acquainted with the French Legislative Assembly. There every Member had a seat and a desk, and, besides that, there was a tribune which a Member must mount who desired to make a speech. The experience of such Assemblies would make one very sorry to introduce such a system here. First of all, they must recollect that they did Business in the House of Commons, and that in most of the Assemblies in which desks were provided the Business was done in Bureaus or in Committees. There would be this great inconvenience attached to every Member having his own place—a Member would have the same place throughout the entire Session; one would always be next to the same Member, and, instead of having the elasticity and the social feeling which at present prevailed, they would have a Member always sitting next to another Member whose company

he might not always prefer. There would be a tendency to break up the House into cliques and sections, and to do away with that freedom and comfort which, so far as his observation went, they enjoyed at present in the House of Commons. He did not think that any individual Member had oversuffered any serious inconvenience from the arrangements as at present. Then it was suggested that the means of intercommunication between the different parts of the House should be increased. That, he thought, would lead to serious inconvenience; Members who now wanted to know what was going on had the advantage of coming to the House and listening to the discussions. They all knew that what they heard had more effect upon them than what they read. If from time to time Members could learn what was transpiring, they would not come into the House at all, and that would not be as convenient as the present system. No doubt, it was very proper that if Members were in Pall Mall or in Fleet Street they should be able to know what was going on in the House; but it was very different if a Member was in the Lobby or the Library. It would be much more pleasant, and even convenient, for a Member to come in and listen to the living voice than to read a summary of a speech.

Dr. FARQUHARSON said, he thought it was very important that every Member should have a seat, but it was of equal importance that every Member should have a locker. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, if he could not make arrangements by which each Member should have a locker?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that not long ago a considerable addition had been made to the number of lockers, and he was not aware that any further demand had been made for them. The complaint of the hon. Member came to him for the first time. With regard to the matter of intercommunication, it was quite true, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said, that the question was raised last year, and that he (Mr. Plunket) undertook to go into it. He had done so, and he had devised a plan by which an additional amount of information could be given to

those outside the House who were desirous of knowing what was going on. What he suggested was an arrangement which would announce who was the last speaker, and that by some signal there should be an intimation when there had been a change. There was, however, some difference of opinion as to the desirability of establishing such communication, and until there was a decided balance of opinion in favour he was afraid it would be difficult for him to secure the sanction of the Treasury to the adoption of the plan he had devised. The proposal to have the telephone in some more convenient part of the House was suggested also for the first time, and he should not like to express any opinion on the subject until he had had an opportunity of considering the matter. He assured the hon. Gentleman that he had done all he could to promote the convenience of the members of the Press so far as the limited space of the House would allow. Not long ago the Gallery had been considerably extended, and any further extension of it would certainly infringe on the limited space at the disposal of Members. While the House remained as at present, he feared it would not be possible to hold out any hope of extended accommodation, which he would very gladly offer if he could.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he saw the difficulty in which the right hon. Gentleman was placed, and he did not wish to be unreasonable. He thought, however, the right hon. Gentleman might reconsider the question of admission to the Lobby, if that were in his Department. [Mr. PLUNKET dissented.] If that was not in the right hon. Gentleman's Department, he would not press the matter now. With regard to the question of intercommunication, he thought it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of providing one of the Exchange Telegraph instruments. They cost £7 or £8 a-year, and, as a tentative arrangement, one might be placed in the Smoking Room. The instruments made a certain amount of noise, not very great, that might be objected to. If it were, he certainly would not suggest its continuance. A fair summary was given of what took place almost as soon as the speaker had uttered the sentence. It was absurd that at the present moment

Mr. Addison

the only means a Member had of knowing what was going on was to go to the Smoking Room, in which a summary was kept by a gentleman there of what transpired. The Exchange Company's instruments gave out a tape, and there was a fair summary, not too full, of what was going on. The right hon. Gentleman might, perhaps, be able to see his way to adopt the suggestion he had made, which would not entail any great expenditure of money.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(5.) £2,200, Gordon Monument.

(6.) £110,629, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Great Britain.

(7.) £12,930, to complete the sum for Furniture of Public Offices, Great Britain.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, although he confessed that the amount of the Vote was not large, still it was just through such small leakages as this that the public money ran away. He did not understand upon what principle the Board of Works managed the supply of furniture to certain Departments. It appeared that some Departments were supplied from the Board of Works, and that others were supplied by the ordinary trade contractors. But he believed it would be much better for the public interest to have a uniform system which would throw all the Departments under one Office so far as the supply of furniture was concerned, and that the system should be more economically managed than was the case at the present moment. It must be plain to everyone that there was a fair opportunity, to say the least of it, for a good deal of waste in the matter of the supply of furniture under the present arrangements. He would have thought that, having regard to the large Vote every year for furniture for Public Departments, the estimated receipts would have been more than was stated. He saw that the estimated receipts for this year amounted only to £100. It was difficult to understand how so small a sum was shown, and he would like to know what became of the large quantity of furniture supplied to Public Departments, which should certainly be represented by a larger amount of receipts. Then, with regard to the question of contracts for the supply of furniture to Public Departments, his

experience was that the whole system of Government contracts required to be thoroughly looked into. He had one or two plain questions to ask upon this subject. In the first place, how were these contracts given out? Were they thrown open to public competition; and, if not, were they thrown open to limited competition, and again, if that was not so, were they given without any competition at all? Then he asked whether these contracts were given out every year, and for how long contractors were appointed to supply the Public Departments; and he would also be glad to know whether it was a fact that one firm alone contracted for the furniture supplied for nearly the whole of the Public Departments? He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the Committee some information on these subjects.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINOK (Whitehaven) said, that on page 23 there was a charge for the Chapter House, Westminster, including police. He asked his right hon. Friend whether or not the Government had the right to exercise any power whatever with regard to the admission of the public to the Chapter House?

THE CHAIRMAN: The observations of the right hon. Gentleman are applicable to Vote 6, and not to the present Vote.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, with regard to the question of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) as to the small amount of the receipts for old furniture, that the reason why the amount was so small was because the practice was to employ workmen to repair damaged furniture as long as it was worth anything at all. When, therefore, the final repairs were made the furniture was practically of little use to anyone, and the value which was obtained and shown in the receipts was as much as the furniture was then worth. With regard to the contracts, these were made for three years at a time, because in that way the Department was able to make better terms with the contractors. The contracts were open to competition, but, up to the present time, to limited competition, because it had been found by experience that those persons who made the lowest tender did not always supply the best

furniture, which was, of course, a very important consideration. The Department exercised a certain discretion in inviting competition from a large number of persons; the contracts were decided by competition amongst the best firms in London, but not in such a manner as to admit of anything like a ring being formed.

Mr. HANBURY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his question as to why certain Departments were supplied by the Board of Works and others were not?

Mr. PLUNKET said, there were only two Departments which were an exception to the rule—namely, the Science and Art Department and the British Museum. The hon. Gentleman would understand that the reason why the furniture for these Departments was placed in a separate Estimate was because they might require some peculiar fittings, which were left to them to be executed in the manner considered to be most suitable. These two Departments, he believed, were the only exceptions, all the others being supplied in the way he had explained.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he could bear testimony to the difficulty which every Minister had in obtaining a supply of furniture from the Board of Works for his Office; and there could be no doubt whatever that it was the desire of the Department to be as economical as possible in this matter. At the same time, he was bound to say that the articles furnished, although very costly, were of a poor character; and he was afraid that the contracts were not made in the very best possible manner. The Secretary to the Treasury, and anyone acquainted with the furnishing of Public Departments, would know how much more sensible a plan it would be if contracts were made with a good manufacturing firm to supply sound and substantial articles; because there could be no doubt that there would be great economical advantage to the Public Service in having goods of the best quality. There was, for instance, an item of £3,700 for household articles, for cleaning purposes, &c.; and surely such things as these could be contracted for with the manufacturers, and something like uniformity of kind and quality obtained. He did not accuse the Department of any extravagance; on the contrary,

Mr. Plunket

as he had said, it was with the greatest possible difficulty that the smallest articles of furniture could be obtained from the Board of Works, and when they were obtained they were of such a quality that no private person would purchase with a view to economy. He thought that much good might be done if the Government invited tenders from manufacturers, and took steps to insure that the articles supplied were of first-class make.

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he would like to know what steps were taken to insure the *bond fide* nature of the contracts? He asked whether, when furniture was required, advertisements were inserted in the public Press inviting furnishing houses to send in tenders, and on what principle those tenders were entertained by the Board of Works—that was to say, whether it was the rule in the Office invariably to accept the lowest tender? The right hon. Gentleman had stated that every effort was made to prevent a ring being formed. He had no doubt that steps of that kind were taken in the Office; but he would point out that, unless the tender was an open one, it would be very difficult to prevent the formation of the rings to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, because under the present system two or three or more houses could very easily form themselves into a ring without the knowledge of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the fact that the Government had their own workshops in which men were employed in repairing furniture. That was the first time this circumstance had come to his knowledge, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman where the workshops were situated, and also what was the number of men engaged in them? He also asked whether the men were engaged by the Department, or were supplied by a contractor, as was done in the case of the Houses of Parliament? If the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to supply this information he believed that the Committee, as well as the taxpayers outside, would be grateful.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he thought the Government would behave in an unbusinesslike spirit if they were to accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member

for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). This Vote, although a small one, involved a very important principle, and he submitted that the adoption of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman would cause great discontent among the traders and dealers of the Metropolis who had to pay heavy rates. He believed that it would not be considered a fair act on the part of any Government who from an economical point of view went behind the backs of these traders and dealt directly with the manufacturers. However much they might desire economy in that House, he hoped the Government would deal with those houses who had a business reputation, and not pass them by in the manner which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer) it would be surely inconvenient if these tenders were open to every trader in the Metropolis, because there would be so many competitors, and amongst them would be a number who had not any standing in the trade and who might be tempted to offer to supply at a low price goods that would turn out to be of very inferior quality. Probably, in no case was quality the test of economy more than in that of the purchase of furniture. Surely the fair course to adopt was what the right hon. Gentleman had explained to be the practice in his Department—namely, to select those retail houses who had a position in the trade for the purpose of these competitions, and certainly he protested against the unbusinesslike—he would not say shabby—suggestion that the Government should pass by traders in the Metropolis who paid large sums in rates and taxes.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was not very well acquainted with the method of business adopted by the Government, when he recommended that they should go to retail shops; because as a matter of fact every Spending Department of the Government went to the best market for the best article they could obtain, and they had nothing whatever to do with the question whether the contractors paid rates and taxes. The hon. Gentleman might as well recommend the Clothing Department of the Army to buy their cloth in Piccadilly, or recommend the War Office to buy their steel of private

persons rather than in the Sheffield Market. It was the duty of the Government to buy their goods on the best terms wherever they could obtain them, and they had no right to take any other course.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he was somewhat surprised that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Addison), who had not even the excuse of being a Metropolitan Member, should recommend them to buy their carpets from dealers in order to make business for the traders in London. That, however, was not the principle on which the House of Commons acted. The correct course was to go into the market, invite tenders, select those which offer the best price and quality, and then if the goods were equal to the sample accept them, and refuse them if they were not so. He protested against this monstrous theory of going to the London traders and pay extra because otherwise they would be offended. The House of Commons did not care one farthing whether they were offended or not.

MR. HANBURY said, he hoped that the Government would be able to say that they carried out the rule of dealing only with manufacturers, and not with retail firms, because, as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had pointed out, this in the first place insured that the goods would be a great deal better, and in the next place a great deal cheaper. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had told the Committee that these contracts were open only to limited competition. He (Mr. Hanbury) thought that the House should be very chary in listening to any Minister who said that Government contracts were dealt with on that principle. He was sure that a great deal of favouritism was shown in every Government Department by the system of limited contracts, and he contended that they should be thrown open to public competition, and that the public should know more about them than they did at the present moment. Under that system it would be perfectly practicable to check undue competition. Under the system of limited competition it was impossible to know who were the contractors on the list, and it was quite probable that some firms never sent into the Government Departments any contract at all. He maintained that the

whole system of contracts in these Departments required to be thoroughly looked into, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the limited competition system would be put an end to, and the whole business thrown open to public competition, just as in the case of private contracts.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he noticed an item in the Vote for furniture for the Glasgow Cathedral. The amount was very small; but he should like to know on what principle the House was called upon to find any money and furniture for Glasgow Cathedral? He observed that there were also some small sums for the supply of furniture to the Scotch Universities. It would be interesting to know whether the Government considered themselves bound to supply furniture to the Scotch Universities, and whether these small supplies of furniture were provided under the general contract?

Mr. PLUNKET said, these contracts were arranged with the greatest care, and there was not the slightest ground for suspicion of favouritism in regard to them.

Mr. MUNDELLA pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the question of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen as to the ground on which the Scotch Universities got furniture from the Office of Works?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that there was a thing once happened in Scotland called the extinction of teinds. He had never himself been able to discover what teinds were when they existed, or why they were extinguished; but it was a Constitutional principle that this entitled Scotland to somewhat more liberal treatment, and he supposed these sums, which were not excessive, were allowed on that ground.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, it would be interesting to know who were the persons that constituted the small number that received preference in the matter of contracts, and the grounds on which that preference was given.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that he had not stated that a small number of firms were on the list, but that, on the contrary, the competition took place between a large number. There was no basis whatever for the superstructure of suspicion which had been raised upon this Vote.

He could assure the Committee that the Department took every pains to get the business done cheaply and well. It was impossible, however, that, if a new table or chair was wanted, the whole trade should be invited to send in contracts. Small things of that kind were done by certain well-known firms whom the Department found by experience to give good value. When large quantities were wanted which could be contracted for as a whole, then tenders were invited, but not from a few firms. The Department exercised every supervision and restraint of undue expenditure. With regard to the workshops for repairing furniture, besides those in that House there were workshops at Somerset House, Scotland Yard, and the Law Courts, employing 16 or 17 men.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, the Committee had every reason to be thankful to the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) for raising this discussion, and he must say that the speech of the First Commissioner of Works in his opinion rather tended to confirm than rebut the complaint put forward by the hon. Member. He would cast no reflection on the right hon. Gentleman, who he was ready to admit was the very best man for the position, but at the same time the right hon. Gentleman must necessarily be very much in the hands of his advisers in a matter of this kind. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give them a list of the firms who were favoured with these contracts, as the hon. Member for Preston had pointed out the mere fact of being a Government contractor was one of the finest advertisements possible for persons in trade, and although the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) shook his head at that statement, it was clear that the matter was regarded in that light by the traders, who advertized the fact that they were Government contractors. There could be no doubt that an announcement of that kind was a valuable one in respect of any business—equal to 10 per cent at least. He believed that the person who supplied tea to the House of Commons advertized that fact to the world, and he was quite sure that an accession of trade would result from it. It was the basis of the whole matter that by giving a contract for supplying Public Departments they

Mr. Hanbury

conferred upon the firm who received it the most valuable consideration. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if they had unlimited competition a large number of small traders would tender, but he would point out that the goods supplied by small traders were quite as good, and sometimes a great deal better, than those supplied by large traders. Some firms only traded upon their names, and supplied goods at a much higher price than they could be purchased for at smaller places of business. The right hon. Gentleman had said that although there was no open competition, a certain number of selected firms were allowed to tender. He believed the right hon. Gentleman said the number was considerable, but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said that it should be universal, and, although the right hon. Gentleman had stated that by that system they might get bad furniture, yet he did not believe there was a manufacturing firm in the world who would be absolutely so foolish as to forfeit their chance of supplying Government Offices by sending in bad goods; but even if that should be the case, those who did so could be at once dismissed. He thought this matter ought to be probed to the bottom, as the Government in this and other Departments were acting on a false system, the evils of which, in his opinion, could only be remedied by adopting the principle of open competition.

Mr. CREMER said, the First Commissioner of Works had not stated how the firms were selected.

Mr. PLUNKET said, although there was a limitation, yet all firms of a proper standing who applied were of course placed upon the list, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman there was no favouritism whatever in the matter. He would look again through the list, and see if it would be to the advantage of the Public Service to extend it.

Mr. MUNDELLA pointed out that in addition to the £16,000 included in the Vote then under consideration, there was in the Estimates, as shown by a foot-note, another sum of £32,000 for furniture of different Departments, making a total of nearly £50,000 altogether for Government Offices under contract with the Board of Works. This item was a large one, and would represent an amount of furniture that

ought to be obtained from the manufacturers on the best possible terms.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he did not wish it to go forth to the public that £50,000 a-year was expended upon furniture in the limited sense in which the word "furniture" was used generally. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield would look at the foot-note to which he had referred, he would find an item of £9,500 for the British Museum. That sum was not for furniture in the ordinary sense of chairs and tables, and the like, but included fittings, cases, and similar things required for exhibiting the objects in the museum. Again, in connection with the Postal and Telegraph Offices there was an item of £6,130, which was also for fittings. Supposing a new office to be taken, a certain sum of money had necessarily to be spent for providing fittings, counters, and other requisites for preparing the office for the staff and for the work to be carried on there. Included in these items were the necessary cost of cleaning, repairing, and taking care of all the furniture supplied. He was not finding fault with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, but merely rose for the purpose of enabling the public to understand that the term "furniture" was not in these Estimates used in the ordinary sense.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the item was not entirely composed of what was generally understood by the term "household furniture." But, nevertheless, in the case of the Post Office, for instance, the charge went on year after year, and he was businessman enough to know that the articles might with very considerable advantage be contracted for year by year from the best firms in the wholesale trade. There was no doubt the vote for the British Museum was mainly for cases, but he remembered a time in the history of the Museum when it was proposed to buy cases at £150 each, which were afterwards supplied at £50.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he saw no reason why contracts for the supply of furniture should be confined to London traders. The taxpayers of the country were not Londoners alone, and he did not see why any profit which might be made by the supplying of

furniture to Government Offices should not be distributed among country traders. The right hon. Gentleman had not yet answered the question as to how many firms were invited to tender. The question was a very pertinent one, and the Committee would be glad to have some information upon it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the Committee ought to have the names of those firms. He could not understand whether the Secretary to the Treasury was ashamed of the firms or whether the firms themselves were ashamed to let it be known that they supplied goods to the public. He would point out that there were two sorts of firms—one which gave long credit and charged high prices, the other which dealt for ready money and doing a business on a very large scale and giving good value. He could not see that there was any valid reason why the names of those firms should not be known.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he was not at all unwilling to give the Committee the names of the firms, but he did not carry them in his mind. With regard to the tendering by Provincial firms, he might say that the furniture was supplied as far as possible by firms in the locality in which it was required—that furniture required in London was competed for in London, and that which was required in the country was competed for among firms in the Provinces.

Mr. CREMER said, that some of the items in this Vote appeared to be old friends in new clothes. He especially asked for information with regard to the item of £3,700 for cleaning, which appeared to him to be extravagant as well as indefinite. He asked what were the articles for which this cleaning was charged!

Mr. PLUNKET said, it was impossible for him to describe, or to give the hon. Gentleman the particulars of all the articles required, which consisted of brooms and other implements.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, there appeared to be every probability of this discussion ending in air. He would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, who was a business man, as to whether, in his own business, he made out a list of firms from amongst whom alone he invited competition? He ventured to say that there was no business in the world regulated on such a principle.

Mr. A. Sutherland

The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had said that his suspicions were unjust, but he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that in business there was only one sound principle, and that was to mistrust everyone, unless you had a system which made dishonesty absolutely impossible. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give the Committee an assurance that the whole question of confining contracts to a certain number of firms should be reconsidered, and that the Treasury should also consider whether they were bound by contracts entered into under the present system.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that it was the duty of the Government to see that the supplies obtained for the Public Service were good, and that they were obtained as cheaply as possible. With regard to the undertaking asked for by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), he had no objection whatever to saying that he would confer with his right hon. Friend at the head of the Department, in order to see whether it was possible to improve the system which now existed with regard to the supply of furniture.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly satisfactory. There was only one small point that he had now to refer to in connection with this Vote, and he asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury on what principle the advertisements inviting tenders were distributed.

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS) (Kent, St. Augustine's) said, that a list was prepared of certain newspapers in which Government advertisements were inserted, inviting tenders for the supply of articles to certain Offices. He should, on Notice of the Question, be glad to give the matter further attention. The subject was now under consideration, and it was quite possible that the other Offices would be made responsible for advertisements inserted relating to supplies for those Offices.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that a question was recently raised in the House of Commons with regard to the manner in which advertisements were

distributed in Ireland. On that occasion a Circular was produced, which made a distinction in the matter of distribution of advertisements as between journals which were favourable and journals which were unfavourable to the existing Government. He now asked whether the distribution of advertisements in England was entirely free from anything of that sort?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, the one desire of the Treasury was to get newspapers most suited for the class of advertisements intended to be inserted, due regard being paid to the amount of their circulation.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked if the list ever changed?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he was not able to answer that question without Notice. The list which he found in the Office had been revised from time to time.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he wished to say a word or two on this question.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the discussion was taking a very wide range.

Vote agreed to.

(8.) £203,514, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, this Vote was one for public buildings, and it contained a vast expenditure for post offices all over the country. Now, he thought it a very questionable thing whether the system commenced by Mr. Fawcett of building these post offices all over the country was the right one. He (Mr. Labouchere) went into a small country town, and he found there a splendid building, far in excess of what they would think the requirements of the place demanded, with the words "Post Office" stuck up over it. Before these buildings were erected the accommodation required by the post office was obtained in houses, which were hired. He should think by enlarging such places to meet the growing requirements of the post office, even with the new parcels post, in country towns sufficient accommodation could be procured, and the country

the expense of these buildings. It used to be said for wise men seemed to him

again. They knew that rents had gone down in almost every country town, and also in London; and it seemed to him that it would be far better for the Government to give up as far as they possibly could this system of building their post offices, and to adopt the system of renting in these country towns one of the very many buildings which were to be found to let. There was another point to which he desired to call attention. He found that in one town they frequently saw a post office much larger and infinitely better than the post office in another town of similar size, and he also found frequently in towns of the same size that a district post office in one place was a very much finer building than that in another place, although there might be exactly the same amount of work to do. He should like the Government to give some explanation on these matters. If it was thought desirable to go on building these new post offices, on what conditions were they to be built? He thought that the same principle they endeavoured to inculcate upon the Treasury upon another Vote just now should be applied in regard to these matters. Was there any contract?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Yes.

MR. LABOUCHERE: There is. Then is it advertised?

MR. PLUNKET: Yes, it is.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then is it given to the lowest tender?

MR. PLUNKET: Usually, but not always.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, if it was not given to the lowest tender, then they knew how these things were done, and unless the greatest care was exercised in these matters unnecessary expenditure was incurred. Where contracts were confined to a few persons, and those persons knew that they had the whole thing in their own hands, they agreed amongst themselves not to cut each other out, and in that way a great deal of money was wasted. He did not think the Government should build these new post offices at all; but if they did he questioned whether, under the circumstances, they were obtaining them as cheaply as they could be obtained. Was there any saving for fittings? He did not

see that furniture came under this head. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) had told them that the furniture item was a very large one for public buildings, because it included fittings; but if that were the case in the present instance, the Vote would be excessively small. Then, again, he thought that £64,500 was an enormous sum to be used for adapting Coldbath Fields Prison into a General Parcel Post Dépôt. What were they going to build there; was it to be a General Parcel Post Dépôt for the whole country? [Mr. PLUNKET assented.] The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works nodded, so that he might take him as answering in the affirmative. But they had a Parcel Post Dépôt now, he supposed, and were able to get on without such an enormous building as would be put on the site of this prison. He did not think any part of this scheme would bear inquiry, and he should like to have replies to the various queries he had put.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that the process of producing a post office was this. When the Postmaster General was satisfied that the work of the post office in any place, whether in the Metropolis or the Provinces, had outgrown the accommodation provided in the existing building, he applied to the Office of Works in the first place, generally speaking, to know whether it was possible, by adaptation or addition to the existing building, to find the accommodation for the increased requirements of his department. Then a surveyor from the Office of Works, who was in charge of the particular district, inquired into the matter to ascertain whether it was possible as an economical step to provide the accommodation by enlarging the existing building. If he reported that that could be done, of course the existing building was enlarged. But if, on the contrary, the surveyor reported that it was not possible, and would not be an economical way of dealing with the matter to alter the existing arrangements, it was necessary to provide new premises, and the surveyor, generally speaking, prepared plans on—he must say—the most modest and unostentatious scale, which were submitted to the Office of Works, and afterwards referred to the Treasury. The result of

the triangular duel which took place between the Post Office, the Office of Works, and the Treasury, was that a plan was approved, and tenders were invited from builders for carrying out the plans so approved of. That was the course usually adopted. He had no doubt that it would be far more expensive to change this method of proceeding and revert to the old plan of hiring premises. That was always a most expensive system—that of hiring the houses used for public offices. This, he thought, covered the whole ground of the hon. Member's remarks. When it was decided to erect a new building, very frequently delay occurred owing to the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory site.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman has made no reply as to fittings.

MR. PLUNKET said, that a certain amount had been obtained in the Vote just passed for fittings. There was in the Vote just passed an item of £6,000 for fittings in the Post Office and Post Office Telegraph Departments, and if these fittings were in the nature of structural arrangements they would be carried out under contract. Other fittings were obtained by tender, as he had explained in connection with the last Vote.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he thought it would be more convenient if they had the Postmaster General present during the consideration of a Vote of this kind. He should like to know if this system of building new post offices, instead of hiring buildings for the purpose, was now being universally adopted in this country where additional accommodation was required? Until recently retail shops had been employed as post offices in many districts, the Post Office Authorities considering that such buildings were sufficiently good for their purpose, without going to the expense of erecting new buildings. There were many towns with as large a population as 15,000 to 18,000 where the work of the post office was carried on in connection with retail shops, greatly to the detriment of comfort and efficiency. That method was one which he thought the Post Office ought to put a stop to. Then there was a great deal of extravagance in the matter of building new post offices. In

Mr. Labouchere

the town of Birmingham, for instance, there was a Vote to be taken for the erection of a new head office there. A few years ago some £40,000 was spent in the construction of a building which was an eyesore, a squat block, one of the most ugly buildings erected in modern times. He had never seen anything surpassing it in ugliness, and he did not know anything which approached it for inconvenience. The public had to go on one side of it to obtain stamps, then to descend a steep street, very dangerous in slippery weather, to another part of the building in order to post their letters. The present Vote included £53,000 for a new head office for Birmingham. He thought a little foresight would have prevented this expenditure. Certainly, in no private concern would an expenditure of £40,000 have been incurred upon one building, and a few years later an expenditure of £53,000 be proposed for a new building to take its place. That method of spending public money ought to be checked by every possible criticism which could be brought to bear upon the Estimates in the House of Commons. That was one of the points he wished to call especial attention to. Another point was this item of £295 which it was proposed to spend on High Street, Birmingham. That, he supposed, was for the repair or alteration of some building which had either been hired or recently bought; and the item of £2,250 for Smethwick was, he presumed, for a new building?

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that before this Vote was taken there was one point to which allusion had been made in previous years, but which came out with much greater force in the present Estimate, which he thought required some explanation, and that was the extraordinary manner in which the Estimates were made for the post offices in and around London. He would take eight different examples in this Vote. There was the proposed post office at Finsbury Park, the total expenditure upon which was to be £2,500, but £5,000 had been already voted for it, and it was not finished, only £1,100 having been spent. In this case, twice as much as the original Estimate had been ready voted. Just below that item was another for the post office at

of that office was put down in the revised Estimates at £2,100, but the amount already voted was £4,200, and only £700 had been spent. Just below that, again, there was the post office at Herne Hill, in which the amount to be expended was £1,000, but already £2,000 had been voted, and £700 spent. Below that there was the case of Leytonstone, the Estimate being £2,100, and the amount voted £4,000. Nothing had been spent up to the 31st December last. In the case of the London Bridge post office the Estimate was £12,500, and the amount voted £22,000, with £3,000 spent. In the case of Wandsworth, the total Estimate was £5,000, and the amount voted £10,000, but nothing had been spent; and in the case of Wimbledon, whilst the amount estimated was only £3,000, the amount voted was £8,700, and only £500 spent. All these cases were in one district—that was to say, the Metropolitan district, and he thought some explanation was due from the Government as to why these Votes appeared in such a shape. In each case the amount spent was twice or three times the amount originally estimated. This was not a new complaint. He (Mr. Childers) complained of it some years ago, and he had expressed a hope that a remedy would be found; but, in spite of what he had said, the evil which he had pointed out was going on worse than ever. He thought the Committee were entitled to some explanation as to what official was responsible in the matter, and whether it was not possible to put an end to this inconvenient system of voting large sums and not spending them, but applying the votes to other buildings. The system was very inconvenient both to the Treasury and to Parliament, and he thought some reason should be given for the irregularity, and a promise that it should be avoided for the future.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had overlooked one rather important explanation which appeared on the face of the Estimate. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted several instances in which he had referred to the total amount voted meaning the total amount which it was intended to spend—

MR. CHILDERS: No; I gave both the estimated cost and the actual Votes separately.

MR. JACKSON said, that the total amount which it was intended to spend was given in the second column. The total amount voted was simply the amount of a number of Votes taken which made these large sums. The explanation was that these sums were simply sums voted and re-voted. The totals in the column in which the amount voted and re-voted were in excess not only of the original Estimate and the revised Estimate, but also of the actual cost of the work, and therefore to that extent it was somewhat misleading. It should be remembered that the gross amount that appeared in that column as voted and re-voted did not represent the actual amount spent on a particular work. The explanation of it was that at the time at which the Estimates were prepared, the Post Office had sent in a demand that they required a post office in such and such a district. As the right hon. Gentleman had truly said, this largely appeared in the London district. Well, during the last few years there had been a large extension of business, not only in the London district, but in other districts; and there had also been a large re-arrangement of business, if he might say so, and the only explanation he could give of the appearance the Vote presented was that certain post offices upon which it was expected the money would be expended in the coming financial year when the Votes were originally agreed to had not been erected. The work had been delayed for some reason or other, and the result had been that there had been several re-votes. Reference had been made to the large cost of the offices at Birmingham. Well, there was no doubt that the post office at Birmingham would prove to be an exceedingly costly business. In the first place the site had been extremely costly, and then the building would also be very costly, because the conveniences and arrangements to be made with a view to giving easy access to the railways would entail very elaborate plans. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had referred to the desirability of renting offices wherever it was practicable. He dared not appeal to the previous experience of the Chairman, but if he

had been able to do so no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would have agreed that this was a subject which had been constantly agitating the minds of Financial Secretaries to the Treasury. The Post Office business was an enormously growing business. It had been largely added to during recent years by the enormous development of the parcels post work, and then, again, there was a demand which they could not complain of, on the part of the public that when they were going to build a post office in a town they should build it in the most central and most convenient place. As a rule that involved the purchase of property in a central part which was not vacant land; and very often the site that was built upon was a site with regard to which they had to pay compensation not only to the people whose houses of business they had pulled down, but also to the people whose businesses they had destroyed. He thought the Post Office could hardly resist the consideration urged upon them that the first thing to be done when a post office was erected, was the selection of the most convenient site for it. He said at once that he sympathized with the view which had been expressed by hon. Members that the expense of these buildings was growing at an enormous rate. He, however, saw no means of remedying that state of things, and he did not think the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton was a practicable one, because, in the first place, if they wanted to do their business economically, they must have a building specially prepared to suit the business they had to do, and in the next place they must have it convenient to the public, and they must have it healthy for the servants who were going to work in it. When one visited some of these post offices—as it had been his duty to do from time to time—and saw the crowded condition in which the people were working, it was quite evident that in the future the House of Commons must look to the expenditure on post office buildings as being one rather of an increasing than a decreasing character. But he could assure hon. Gentlemen that every one of these cases went through a most thorough sifting, first by the officer of the Board of Works, by whom the plans were prepared on the instruction of the

Post Office, and next by the Treasury, to which the plans and estimates of the cost were submitted; and all he could say was that, struggle as they did from time to time to cut down both the cost of the sites and the buildings, one was almost inevitably forced to the conclusion that when they were dealing with public buildings, or buildings belonging to public departments which had to be used by thousands of people, they must have regard to the convenience of the public, to the permanence of the building, and the health of the persons who were going to occupy it. If they were to comply with these conditions, it was impossible to be niggardly in their expenditure. The Committee would remember that Coldbath Fields Prison had been closed as a prison. The site, therefore, became available for some other purpose. The post office requirements in London had, as he had already said, been growing at an enormous rate. A site having been acquired, plans had been prepared for the building of a new post office at St. Martin's-le-Grand. This would be called "General Post Office North." He could not say what the cost of the building would be, because up to the present they had only acquired the site and prepared the plans; they had not got estimates for the building itself. But they had been warned for some time that a very considerable extension would be necessary for the purpose of the Parcels Post, even when the additional accommodation which was now in course of being provided had been provided. He ought to say that the building which was about to be constructed at St. Martin's-le-Grand would be largely, almost entirely, occupied for what might be termed clerical work. A very considerable portion of the parcels post work in London was carried on at the old General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and almost entirely carried on in the basement of the building. The accommodation had become much too small for the requirements of the Post Office, and the Treasury were pressed to give sanction for the acquisition of several sites and for the provision of several buildings in different parts of London for the purpose of conducting the Parcels Post. In addition to the buildings which the Post Office had, and which were known as post office buildings, the

rented several buildings. A great deal of the accommodation which they rented was at the large railway stations in London. The suggestion was made that in view of the growing business which was coming to the Post Office by reason of the Parcels Post and by reason of the peculiarly favourable situation which Coldbath Fields Prison occupied, being in the direct route to the railway stations by which the far larger portion of the parcels work from London was done, the Government should seriously consider the question of handing over the site of Coldbath Fields Prison to the Post Office authorities for the purpose of establishing there a central dépôt where most of the parcels post work of London could be done. The question was very carefully considered, and eventually the Treasury came to the conclusion that the suggestion was one which ought to be adopted, and it had been adopted. He reminded the Committee of the position and the condition of the streets at the entrance to the Post Office of St. Martin's-le-Grand. Some statistics bearing upon the traffic there had been obtained, from which it appeared that as many as 700 carts engaged in parcels post work crossed the street at the entrance to the Post Office every day. Every Member of the Committee would admit at once that in the interest of the traffic of London it was extremely desirable if it were possible to remove so great an obstruction to the traffic at such a crowded part of the City. But there was another reason why the suggestion should be adopted. There were at Coldbath Fields nearly nine acres of land. The Post Office required in the first instance five acres, and the way in which the case presented itself to him was that if it was necessary for the purpose of their business to secure so large a space as five acres in one particular district of London, what would it cost them to get it. The estimated value of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison was £100,000, or, in round figures, between £10,000 and £12,000 per acre. But if they wanted

any conveniences, not an acre cost. ent

the Post Office, the Government could not do better than hand it over. They handed the site over, and enabled the Post Office Authorities to take possession of it before the crush of business during the last Christmas season. He had heard that the convenience of dealing with the parcels post business at this particular centre and the relief given to other districts of London had been very great indeed. Indeed, one important official had said to him—"It is the best thing that has ever been done for the Post Office since I have been connected with it." The decision to hand over the site to the Postal Authorities was come to after most careful consideration. Experience had proved the wisdom of the decision. It would not only be possible in the future to concentrate all the parcels post business at this particular spot, but to utilize it for many other post office purposes, and for some telegraphic purposes. He believed it was intended, for instance, to use it as a place where all returned parcels should be dealt with, and where what were known as dead letters should be dealt with. He ought also to say there would be effected, when the scheme was complete, a considerable annual saving, because already notice had been given to the Great Northern Company that the Post Office would give up possession of a building belonging to them, and for which a rent of £800 or £900 a-year had been paid. He believed he was correct in saying that it was intended to do at Coldbath Fields work which was now done in other premises, the total rental of which amounted to more than £3,000 a-year.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley) said, he gathered from the explanation of the hon. Gentleman that the site was at present used principally for clerical work in connection with the parcels post.

Mr. JACKSON said, that what he stated was that the building which it was now proposed to build at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and which would be called General Post Office North, would be used almost entirely for clerical work.

Mr. WOODALL asked if they were to understand that the Coldbath Fields premises would be in direct communication with the Underground Railway?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. Jackson

Mr. WOODALL: Is that contemplated?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, he was very sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) was not present, because he desired to urge him to reconsider the answer he gave the other day with regard to the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. There was no doubt that the commercial men of the Kingdom were very anxious with regard to what appeared to them to be the very unsatisfactory state of the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General the other day whether it was true that nearly 70 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, and that the two top floors of the office were above the high pressure water main. The right hon. Gentleman replied that 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, but that only the top floor was above the high pressure main. That was a very unsatisfactory state of things, because it was easy to conceive that if a fire occurred at the office the whole telegraphic arrangements of the country might be upset. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had said that the building was fire proof and that no alterations were contemplated. This was a favourable opportunity for drawing the attention of the Government to the fact that the telegraphic arrangements were in a very critical state. Any day might bring a disaster, and the Government might be severely blamed for not having paid attention to the matter. He urged the Government to take the matter into their consideration.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, the growth of the Post Office was a matter of such general interest and vast importance that he hesitated to criticize anything but the grants for buildings. That, however, was a point in regard to which there might be a great deal of extravagance. He rose particularly to draw attention to the item of £14,800 taken for the post office at Bristol. He understood from the account before him that £3,940 of that amount was to be spent this year. Was that so?

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he desired to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman in respect to the post office at Wandsworth. For two successive years £5,000 had been taken for a new post office at Wandsworth, but had never been spent. Last year it was said that no site could be obtained. He believed his constituents had sent in a number of sites to the Postmaster General at his request. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could say he had now selected a site.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he wished to ask how the Estimates in the cases of the 53 works referred to in the Vote were obtained? Were they obtained by open tender, and could the right hon. Gentleman give approximately the number of builders engaged upon the works? The experience of the London School Board as to the danger of allowing buildings to be constructed by two or three contractors was such that the Committee would do well to avoid falling into the same error.

MR. JACKSON said, he could answer very satisfactorily the question the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cremer) had put. The greatest care was taken to give every publicity that tenders were invited and to secure that, if in the first instance only a small number of tenders was received, every effort should be made to obtain an increased number. He had in his mind at the moment the case of Inverness. Tenders were publicly invited, but the estimates for the work were so largely in excess of the original estimate that the Treasury refused in the first instance to sanction the amount. Further inquiries were instituted and every effort made to get additional competition. He believed that in nearly every case, unless there was some substantial reason why it should not be so, the lowest tender was accepted. In every case there was open competition, and the Department took every care that the work was efficiently as well as economically performed. He assured hon. Members that the Department was very desirous to keep as far as they could within their original estimates, but very often, even after tenders were received, it was necessary to make alterations in the plans. The hon. Member for East Bristol (Mr. Handel Cossham) had asked what amount was to be expended

at Bristol in the coming year. The amount which it was expected would be expended at Bristol during the current year was £8,000—£5,400 in respect of the post services, and £2,600 for the telegraphs. He need not remind the hon. Member that that was merely a sub-division of the total sum for the purpose of keeping the accounts of the post office and telegraph services separate.

MR. PLUNKET said, that as regards the post office at Wandsworth the Postal Authorities had not yet been able to obtain a suitable site. They were doing the best they could to get one, and were most anxious to provide new postal accommodation there. Of course, until a site had been acquired the money taken could not be expended.

MR. KIMBER asked, how it was that £700 was expected to be expended during the current year?

MR. PLUNKET said, the authorities lived in hope that a site would be obtained. If a site were obtained they would proceed to prepare the necessary plans at once. His hon. Friend would be the first in the interest of his constituents to require that the work should be pushed on.

MR. KIMBER said, that £700 would certainly not cover the cost of the site required. If the authorities lived in hope of acquiring a site, why did they not take a sum sufficient to cover the cost of it?

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) wished to say, in reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer), that it was not the case that the School Board of London only employed two or three contractors, and that the result had been unsatisfactory. They formerly employed as contractor any respectable builder who got his name on the Board's list. For years they never had less than eight or 10 builders tendering for a particular school. Lately they had thrown the tenders entirely open, and it was very doubtful whether they had gained thereby. The Board Schools had been very economically built considering the accommodation they afforded and their durable character.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said, he was slightly misunderstood by the hon. Gentleman with reference to the expenditure at Birmingham. He did not

whole system of contracts in these Departments required to be thoroughly looked into, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the limited competition system would be put an end to, and the whole business thrown open to public competition, just as in the case of private contracts.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he noticed an item in the Vote for furniture for the Glasgow Cathedral. The amount was very small; but he should like to know on what principle the House was called upon to find any money and furniture for Glasgow Cathedral? He observed that there were also some small sums for the supply of furniture to the Scotch Universities. It would be interesting to know whether the Government considered themselves bound to supply furniture to the Scotch Universities, and whether these small supplies of furniture were provided under the general contract?

Mr. PLUNKET said, these contracts were arranged with the greatest care, and there was not the slightest ground for suspicion of favouritism in regard to them.

Mr. MUNDELLA pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the question of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen as to the ground on which the Scotch Universities got furniture from the Office of Works?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that there was a thing once happened in Scotland called the extinction of teinds. He had never himself been able to discover what teinds were when they existed, or why they were extinguished; but it was a Constitutional principle that this entitled Scotland to somewhat more liberal treatment, and he supposed these sums, which were not excessive, were allowed on that ground.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, it would be interesting to know who were the persons that constituted the small number that received preference in the matter of contracts, and the grounds on which that preference was given.

Mr. PLUNKET said, that he had not stated that a small number of firms were on the list, but that, on the contrary, the competition took place between a large number. There was no basis whatever for the superstructure of suspicion which had been raised upon this Vote.

He could assure the Committee that the Department took every pains to get the business done cheaply and well. It was impossible, however, that, if a new table or chair was wanted, the whole trade should be invited to send in contracts. Small things of that kind were done by certain well-known firms whom the Department found by experience to give good value. When large quantities were wanted which could be contracted for as a whole, then tenders were invited, but not from a few firms. The Department exercised every supervision and restraint of undue expenditure. With regard to the workshops for repairing furniture, besides those in that House there were workshops at Somerset House, Scotland Yard, and the Law Courts, employing 16 or 17 men.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, the Committee had every reason to be thankful to the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) for raising this discussion, and he must say that the speech of the First Commissioner of Works in his opinion rather tended to confirm than rebut the complaint put forward by the hon. Member. He would cast no reflection on the right hon. Gentleman, who he was ready to admit was the very best man for the position, but at the same time the right hon. Gentleman must necessarily be very much in the hands of his advisers in a matter of this kind. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give them a list of the firms who were favoured with these contracts, as the hon. Member for Preston had pointed out the mere fact of being a Government contractor was one of the finest advertisements possible for persons in trade, and although the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) shook his head at that statement, it was clear that the matter was regarded in that light by the traders, who advertized the fact that they were Government contractors. There could be no doubt that an announcement of that kind was a valuable one in respect of any business—equal to 10 per cent at least. He believed that the person who supplied tea to the House of Commons advertized that fact to the world, and he was quite sure that an accession of trade would result from it. It was the basis of the whole matter that by giving a contract for supplying Public Departments they

Mr. Hanbury

conferred upon the firm who received it the most valuable consideration. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if they had unlimited competition a large number of small traders would tender, but he would point out that the goods supplied by small traders were quite as good, and sometimes a great deal better, than those supplied by large traders. Some firms only traded upon their names, and supplied goods at a much higher price than they could be purchased for at smaller places of business. The right hon. Gentleman had said that although there was no open competition, a certain number of selected firms were allowed to tender. He believed the right hon. Gentleman said the number was considerable, but he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) said that it should be universal, and, although the right hon. Gentleman had stated that by that system they might get bad furniture, yet he did not believe there was a manufacturing firm in the world who would be absolutely so foolish as to forfeit their chance of supplying Government Offices by sending in bad goods; but even if that should be the case, those who did so could be at once dismissed. He thought this matter ought to be probed to the bottom, as the Government in this and other Departments were acting on a false system, the evils of which, in his opinion, could only be remedied by adopting the principle of open competition.

Mr. CREMER said, the First Commissioner of Works had not stated how the firms were selected.

Mr. PLUNKET said, although there was a limitation, yet all firms of a proper standing who applied were of course placed upon the list, and he could assure the hon. Gentleman there was no favouritism whatever in the matter. He would look again through the list, and see if it would be to the advantage of the Public Service to extend it.

Mr. MUNDELLA pointed out that in addition to the £16,000 included in the Vote then under consideration, there was in the Estimates, as shown by a foot-note, another sum of £32,000 for furniture of different Departments, making a total of nearly £50,000 altogether for Government Offices under contract with the Board of Works. This item was a large one, and would represent an amount of furniture that

ought to be obtained from the manufacturers on the best possible terms.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he did not wish it to go forth to the public that £50,000 a-year was expended upon furniture in the limited sense in which the word "furniture" was used generally. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield would look at the foot-note to which he had referred, he would find an item of £9,500 for the British Museum. That sum was not for furniture in the ordinary sense of chairs and tables, and the like, but included fittings, cases, and similar things required for exhibiting the objects in the museum. Again, in connection with the Postal and Telegraph Offices there was an item of £6,130, which was also for fittings. Supposing a new office to be taken, a certain sum of money had necessarily to be spent for providing fittings, counters, and other requisites for preparing the office for the staff and for the work to be carried on there. Included in these items were the necessary cost of cleaning, repairing, and taking care of all the furniture supplied. He was not finding fault with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, but merely rose for the purpose of enabling the public to understand that the term "furniture" was not in these Estimates used in the ordinary sense.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the item was not entirely composed of what was generally understood by the term "household furniture." But, nevertheless, in the case of the Post Office, for instance, the charge went on year after year, and he was business-man enough to know that the articles might with very considerable advantage be contracted for year by year from the best firms in the wholesale trade. There was no doubt the vote for the British Museum was mainly for cases, but he remembered a time in the history of the Museum when it was proposed to buy cases at £150 each, which were afterwards supplied at £50.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, he saw no reason why contracts for the supply of furniture should be confined to London traders. The taxpayers of the country were not Londoners alone, and he did not see why any profit which might be made by the supplying of

furniture to Government Offices should not be distributed among country traders. The right hon. Gentleman had not yet answered the question as to how many firms were invited to tender. The question was a very pertinent one, and the Committee would be glad to have some information upon it.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the Committee ought to have the names of those firms. He could not understand whether the Secretary to the Treasury was ashamed of the firms or whether the firms themselves were ashamed to let it be known that they supplied goods to the public. He would point out that there were two sorts of firms—one which gave long credit and charged high prices, the other which dealt for ready money and doing a business on a very large scale and giving good value. He could not see that there was any valid reason why the names of those firms should not be known.

MR. PLUNKET said, he was not at all unwilling to give the Committee the names of the firms, but he did not carry them in his mind. With regard to the tendering by Provincial firms, he might say that the furniture was supplied as far as possible by firms in the locality in which it was required—that furniture required in London was competed for in London, and that which was required in the country was competed for among firms in the Provinces.

MR. CREMER said, that some of the items in this Vote appeared to be old friends in new clothes. He especially asked for information with regard to the item of £3,700 for cleaning, which appeared to him to be extravagant as well as indefinite. He asked what were the articles for which this cleaning was charged!

MR. PLUNKET said, it was impossible for him to describe, or to give the hon. Gentleman the particulars of all the articles required, which consisted of brooms and other implements.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, there appeared to be every probability of this discussion ending in air. He would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, who was a business man, as to whether, in his own business, he made out a list of firms from amongst whom alone he invited competition? He ventured to say that there was no business in the world regulated on such a principle.

Mr. A. Sutherland

The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had said that his suspicions were unjust, but he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that in business there was only one sound principle, and that was to mistrust everyone, unless you had a system which made dishonesty absolutely impossible. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should give the Committee an assurance that the whole question of confining contracts to a certain number of firms should be reconsidered, and that the Treasury should also consider whether they were bound by contracts entered into under the present system.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that it was the duty of the Government to see that the supplies obtained for the Public Service were good, and that they were obtained as cheaply as possible. With regard to the undertaking asked for by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (MR. T. P. O'CONNOR), he had no objection whatever to saying that he would confer with his right hon. Friend at the head of the Department, in order to see whether it was possible to improve the system which now existed with regard to the supply of furniture.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly satisfactory. There was only one small point that he had now to refer to in connection with this Vote, and he asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury on what principle the advertisements inviting tenders were distributed.

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS) (Kent, St. Augustine's) said, that a list was prepared of certain newspapers in which Government advertisements were inserted, inviting tenders for the supply of articles to certain Offices. He should, on Notice of the Question, be glad to give the matter further attention. The subject was now under consideration, and it was quite possible that the other Offices would be made responsible for advertisements inserted relating to supplies for those Offices.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that a question was recently raised in the House of Commons with regard to the manner in which advertisements were

distributed in Ireland. On that occasion a Circular was produced, which made a distinction in the matter of distribution of advertisements as between journals which were favourable and journals which were unfavourable to the existing Government. He now asked whether the distribution of advertisements in England was entirely free from anything of that sort?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, the one desire of the Treasury was to get newspapers most suited for the class of advertisements intended to be inserted, due regard being paid to the amount of their circulation.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked if the list ever changed?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said, he was not able to answer that question without Notice. The list which he found in the Office had been revised from time to time.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he wished to say a word or two on this question.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the discussion was taking a very wide range.

Vote agreed to.

(8.) £203,514, to complete the sum for Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, this Vote was one for public buildings, and it contained a vast expenditure for post offices all over the country. Now, he thought it a very questionable thing whether the system commenced by Mr. Fawcett of building these post offices all over the country was the right one. He (Mr. Labouchere) went into a small country town, and he found there a splendid building, far in excess of what they would think the requirements of the place demanded, with the words "Post Office" stuck up over it. Before these buildings were erected the accommodation required by the post office was obtained in houses, which were hired. He should think by enlarging such places to meet the growing requirements of the post office, even with the new parcels post, in country towns sufficient accommodation could be procured, and the country would be saved the expense of these large new buildings. It used to be said that fools built houses for wise men to live in them, and it seemed to him that that time had come

again. They knew that rents had gone down in almost every country town, and also in London; and it seemed to him that it would be far better for the Government to give up as far as they possibly could this system of building their post offices, and to adopt the system of renting in these country towns one of the very many buildings which were to be found to let. There was another point to which he desired to call attention. He found that in one town they frequently saw a post office much larger and infinitely better than the post office in another town of similar size, and he also found frequently in towns of the same size that a district post office in one place was a very much finer building than that in another place, although there might be exactly the same amount of work to do. He should like the Government to give some explanation on these matters. If it was thought desirable to go on building these new post offices, on what conditions were they to be built? He thought that the same principle they endeavoured to inculcate upon the Treasury upon another Vote just now should be applied in regard to these matters. Was there any contract?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Yes.

MR. LABOUCHERE: There is. Then is it advertised?

MR. PLUNKET: Yes, it is.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then is it given to the lowest tender?

MR. PLUNKET: Usually, but not always.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, if it was not given to the lowest tender, then they knew how these things were done, and unless the greatest care was exercised in these matters unnecessary expenditure was incurred. Where contracts were confined to a few persons, and those persons knew that they had the whole thing in their own hands, they agreed amongst themselves not to cut each other out, and in that way a great deal of money was wasted. He did not think the Government should build these new post offices at all; but if they did he questioned whether, under the existing system, they were obtaining them with their fittings as cheaply as they might be obtained. Was there any tender invited for fittings? He did not

see that furniture came under this head. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) had told them that the furniture item was a very large one for public buildings, because it included fittings; but if that were the case in the present instance, the Vote would be excessively small. Then, again, he thought that £64,500 was an enormous sum to be used for adapting Coldbath Fields Prison into a General Parcel Post Depot. What were they going to build there; was it to be a General Parcel Post Depot for the whole country? [Mr. PLUNKET assented.] The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works nodded, so that he might take him as answering in the affirmative. But they had a Parcel Post Depot now, he supposed, and were able to get on without such an enormous building as would be put on the site of this prison. He did not think any part of this scheme would bear inquiry, and he should like to have replies to the various queries he had put.

MR. PLUNKET said, that the process of producing a post office was this. When the Postmaster General was satisfied that the work of the post office in any place, whether in the Metropolis or the Provinces, had outgrown the accommodation provided in the existing building, he applied to the Office of Works in the first place, generally speaking, to know whether it was possible, by adaptation or addition to the existing building, to find the accommodation for the increased requirements of his department. Then a surveyor from the Office of Works, who was in charge of the particular district, inquired into the matter to ascertain whether it was possible as an economical step to provide the accommodation by enlarging the existing building. If he reported that that could be done, of course the existing building was enlarged. But if, on the contrary, the surveyor reported that it was not possible, and would not be an economical way of dealing with the matter to alter the existing arrangements, it was necessary to provide new premises, and the surveyor, generally speaking, prepared plans on—he must say—the most modest and unostentatious scale, which were submitted to the Office of Works, and afterwards referred to the Treasury. The result of

the triangular duel which took place between the Post Office, the Office of Works, and the Treasury, was that a plan was approved, and tenders were invited from builders for carrying out the plans so approved of. That was the course usually adopted. He had no doubt that it would be far more expensive to change this method of proceeding and revert to the old plan of hiring premises. That was always a most expensive system—that of hiring the houses used for public offices. This, he thought, covered the whole ground of the hon. Member's remarks. When it was decided to erect a new building, very frequently delay occurred owing to the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory site.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman has made no reply as to fittings.

MR. PLUNKET said, that a certain amount had been obtained in the Vote just passed for fittings. There was in the Vote just passed an item of £6,000 for fittings in the Post Office and Post Office Telegraph Departments, and if these fittings were in the nature of structural arrangements they would be carried out under contract. Other fittings were obtained by tender, as he had explained in connection with the last Vote.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he thought it would be more convenient if they had the Postmaster General present during the consideration of a Vote of this kind. He should like to know if this system of building new post offices, instead of hiring buildings for the purpose, was now being universally adopted in this country where additional accommodation was required? Until recently retail shops had been employed as post offices in many districts, the Post Office Authorities considering that such buildings were sufficiently good for their purpose, without going to the expense of erecting new buildings. There were many towns with as large a population as 15,000 to 18,000 where the work of the post office was carried on in connection with retail shops, greatly to the detriment of comfort and efficiency. That method was one which he thought the Post Office ought to put a stop to. Then there was a great deal of extravagance in the matter of building new post offices. In

Mr. Labouchere

the town of Birmingham, for instance, there was a Vote to be taken for the erection of a new head office there. A few years ago some £40,000 was spent in the construction of a building which was an eyesore, a squat block, one of the most ugly buildings erected in modern times. He had never seen anything surpassing it in ugliness, and he did not know anything which approached it for inconvenience. The public had to go on one side of it to obtain stamps, then to descend a steep street, very dangerous in slippery weather, to another part of the building in order to post their letters. The present Vote included £53,000 for a new head office for Birmingham. He thought a little foresight would have prevented this expenditure. Certainly, in no private concern would an expenditure of £40,000 have been incurred upon one building, and a few years later an expenditure of £53,000 be proposed for a new building to take its place. That method of expending public money ought to be checked by every possible criticism which could be brought to bear upon the Estimates in the House of Commons. That was one of the points he wished to call especial attention to. Another point was this item of £295 which it was proposed to spend on High Street, Birmingham. That, he supposed, was for the repair or alteration of some building which had either been hired or recently bought; and the item of £2,250 for Smethwick was, he presumed, for a new building?

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, that before this Vote was taken there was one point to which allusion had been made in previous years, but which came out with much greater force in the present Estimate, which he thought required some explanation, and that was the extraordinary manner in which the Estimates were made for the post offices in and around London. He would take eight different examples in this Vote. There was the proposed post office at Finsbury Park, the total expenditure upon which was to be £2,500, but £5,000 had been already voted for it, and it was not finished, only £1,100 having been spent. In this case, twice as much as the original Estimate had been already voted. Just below that item there was another for the post office at Hackney. The total cost

of that office was put down in the revised Estimates at £2,100, but the amount already voted was £4,200, and only £700 had been spent. Just below that, again, there was the post office at Herne Hill, in which the amount to be expended was £1,000, but already £2,000 had been voted, and £700 spent. Below that there was the case of Leytonstone, the Estimate being £2,100, and the amount voted £4,000. Nothing had been spent up to the 31st December last. In the case of the London Bridge post office the Estimate was £12,500, and the amount voted £22,000, with £3,000 spent. In the case of Wandsworth, the total Estimate was £5,000, and the amount voted £10,000, but nothing had been spent; and in the case of Wimbledon, whilst the amount estimated was only £3,000, the amount voted was £8,700, and only £500 spent. All these cases were in one district—that was to say, the Metropolitan district, and he thought some explanation was due from the Government as to why these Votes appeared in such a shape. In each case the amount spent was twice or three times the amount originally estimated. This was not a new complaint. He (Mr. Childers) complained of it some years ago, and he had expressed a hope that a remedy would be found; but, in spite of what he had said, the evil which he had pointed out was going on worse than ever. He thought the Committee were entitled to some explanation as to what official was responsible in the matter, and whether it was not possible to put an end to this inconvenient system of voting large sums and not spending them, but applying the votes to other buildings. The system was very inconvenient both to the Treasury and to Parliament, and he thought some reason should be given for the irregularity, and a promise that it should be avoided for the future.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had overlooked one rather important explanation which appeared on the face of the Estimate. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted several instances in which he had referred to the total amount voted meaning the total amount which it was intended to spend—

MR. CHILDERS: No; I gave both the estimated cost and the actual Votes separately.

MR. JACKSON said, that the total amount which it was intended to spend was given in the second column. The total amount voted was simply the amount of a number of Votes taken which made these large sums. The explanation was that these sums were simply sums voted and re-voted. The totals in the column in which the amount voted and re-voted were in excess not only of the original Estimate and the revised Estimate, but also of the actual cost of the work, and therefore to that extent it was somewhat misleading. It should be remembered that the gross amount that appeared in that column as voted and re-voted did not represent the actual amount spent on a particular work. The explanation of it was that at the time at which the Estimates were prepared, the Post Office had sent in a demand that they required a post office in such and such a district. As the right hon. Gentleman had truly said, this largely appeared in the London district. Well, during the last few years there had been a large extension of business, not only in the London district, but in other districts; and there had also been a large re-arrangement of business, if he might say so, and the only explanation he could give of the appearance the Vote presented was that certain post offices upon which it was expected the money would be expended in the coming financial year when the Votes were originally agreed to had not been erected. The work had been delayed for some reason or other, and the result had been that there had been several re-votes. Reference had been made to the large cost of the offices at Birmingham. Well, there was no doubt that the post office at Birmingham would prove to be an exceedingly costly business. In the first place the site had been extremely costly, and then the building would also be very costly, because the conveniences and arrangements to be made with a view to giving easy access to the railways would entail very elaborate plans. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had referred to the desirability of renting offices wherever it was practicable. He dared not appeal to the previous experience of the Chairman, but if he

had been able to do so no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would have agreed that this was a subject which had been constantly agitating the minds of Financial Secretaries to the Treasury. The Post Office business was an enormously growing business. It had been largely added to during recent years by the enormous development of the parcels post work, and then, again, there was a demand which they could not complain of, on the part of the public that when they were going to build a post office in a town they should build it in the most central and most convenient place. As a rule that involved the purchase of property in a central part which was not vacant land; and very often the site that was built upon was a site with regard to which they had to pay compensation not only to the people whose houses of business they had pulled down, but also to the people whose businesses they had destroyed. He thought the Post Office could hardly resist the consideration urged upon them that the first thing to be done when a post office was erected, was the selection of the most convenient site for it. He said at once that he sympathized with the view which had been expressed by hon. Members that the expense of these buildings was growing at an enormous rate. He, however, saw no means of remedying that state of things, and he did not think the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton was a practicable one, because, in the first place, if they wanted to do their business economically, they must have a building specially prepared to suit the business they had to do, and in the next place they must have it convenient to the public, and they must have it healthy for the servants who were going to work in it. When one visited some of these post offices—as it had been his duty to do from time to time—and saw the crowded condition in which the people were working, it was quite evident that in the future the House of Commons must look to the expenditure on post office buildings as being one rather of an increasing than a decreasing character. But he could assure hon. Gentlemen that every one of these cases went through a most thorough sifting, first by the officer of the Board of Works, by whom the plans were prepared on the instruction of the

Post Office, and next by the Treasury, to which the plans and estimates of the cost were submitted; and all he could say was that, struggle as they did from time to time to cut down both the cost of the sites and the buildings, one was almost inevitably forced to the conclusion that when they were dealing with public buildings, or buildings belonging to public departments which had to be used by thousands of people, they must have regard to the convenience of the public, to the permanence of the building, and the health of the persons who were going to occupy it. If they were to comply with these conditions, it was impossible to be niggardly in their expenditure. The Committee would remember that Coldbath Fields Prison had been closed as a prison. The site, therefore, became available for some other purpose. The post office requirements in London had, as he had already said, been growing at an enormous rate. A site having been acquired, plans had been prepared for the building of a new post office at St. Martin's-le-Grand. This would be called "General Post Office North." He could not say what the cost of the building would be, because up to the present they had only acquired the site and prepared the plans; they had not got estimates for the building itself. But they had been warned for some time that a very considerable extension would be necessary for the purpose of the Parcels Post, even when the additional accommodation which was now in course of being provided had been provided. He ought to say that the building which was about to be constructed at St. Martin's-le-Grand would be largely, almost entirely, occupied for what might be termed clerical work. A very considerable portion of the parcels post work in London was carried on at the old General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and almost entirely carried on in the basement of the building. The accommodation had become much too small for the requirements of the Post Office, and the Treasury were pressed to give sanction for the acquisition of several sites and for the provision of several buildings in different parts of London for the purpose of conducting the Parcels Post. In addition to the buildings which the Post Office had, and which were known as ordinary post office buildings, the Post Office

rented several buildings. A great deal of the accommodation which they rented was at the large railway stations in London. The suggestion was made that in view of the growing business which was coming to the Post Office by reason of the Parcels Post and by reason of the peculiarly favourable situation which Coldbath Fields Prison occupied, being in the direct route to the railway stations by which the far larger portion of the parcels work from London was done, the Government should seriously consider the question of handing over the site of Coldbath Fields Prison to the Post Office authorities for the purpose of establishing there a central dépôt where most of the parcels post work of London could be done. The question was very carefully considered, and eventually the Treasury came to the conclusion that the suggestion was one which ought to be adopted, and it had been adopted. He reminded the Committee of the position and the condition of the streets at the entrance to the Post Office of St. Martin's-le-Grand. Some statistics bearing upon the traffic there had been obtained, from which it appeared that as many as 700 carts engaged in parcels post work crossed the street at the entrance to the Post Office every day. Every Member of the Committee would admit at once that in the interest of the traffic of London it was extremely desirable if it were possible to remove so great an obstruction to the traffic at such a crowded part of the City. But there was another reason why the suggestion should be adopted. There were at Coldbath Fields nearly nine acres of land. The Post Office required in the first instance five acres, and the way in which the case presented itself to him was that if it was necessary for the purpose of their business to secure so large a space as five acres in one particular district of London, what would it cost them to get it. The estimated value of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison was £100,000, or, in round figures, between £10,000 and £12,000 per acre. But he maintained that if they wanted to get five acres of land in any convenient spot for post office purposes, not £10,000 an acre, but £100,000 an acre would have been much nearer the cost. It therefore seemed to him the argument was conclusive that if the business required that the site should be given to

the Post Office, the Government could not do better than hand it over. They handed the site over, and enabled the Post Office Authorities to take possession of it before the crush of business during the last Christmas season. He had heard that the convenience of dealing with the parcels post business at this particular centre and the relief given to other districts of London had been very great indeed. Indeed, one important official had said to him—"It is the best thing that has ever been done for the Post Office since I have been connected with it." The decision to hand over the site to the Postal Authorities was come to after most careful consideration. Experience had proved the wisdom of the decision. It would not only be possible in the future to concentrate all the parcels post business at this particular spot, but to utilize it for many other post office purposes, and for some telegraphic purposes. He believed it was intended, for instance, to use it as a place where all returned parcels should be dealt with, and where what were known as dead letters should be dealt with. He ought also to say there would be effected, when the scheme was complete, a considerable annual saving, because already notice had been given to the Great Northern Company that the Post Office would give up possession of a building belonging to them, and for which a rent of £800 or £900 a-year had been paid. He believed he was correct in saying that it was intended to do at Coldbath Fields work which was now done in other premises, the total rental of which amounted to more than £3,000 a-year.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley) said, he gathered from the explanation of the hon. Gentleman that the site was at present used principally for clerical work in connection with the parcels post.

Mr. JACKSON said, that what he stated was that the building which it was now proposed to build at St. Martin's-le-Grand, and which would be called General Post Office North, would be used almost entirely for clerical work.

Mr. WOODALL asked if they were to understand that the Coldbath Fields premises would be in direct communication with the Underground Railway?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. Jackson

Mr. WOODALL: Is that contemplated?

Mr. JACKSON: Not at present.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, he was very sorry the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) was not present, because he desired to urge him to reconsider the answer he gave the other day with regard to the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. There was no doubt that the commercial men of the Kingdom were very anxious with regard to what appeared to them to be the very unsatisfactory state of the telegraphic arrangements at St. Martin's-le-Grand. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General the other day whether it was true that nearly 70 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, and that the two top floors of the office were above the high pressure water main. The right hon. Gentleman replied that 50 per cent of the telegrams of the United Kingdom passed through St. Martin's-le-Grand, but that only the top floor was above the high pressure main. That was a very unsatisfactory state of things, because it was easy to conceive that if a fire occurred at the office the whole telegraphic arrangements of the country might be upset. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General had said that the building was fire proof and that no alterations were contemplated. This was a favourable opportunity for drawing the attention of the Government to the fact that the telegraphic arrangements were in a very critical state. Any day might bring a disaster, and the Government might be severely blamed for not having paid attention to the matter. He urged the Government to take the matter into their consideration.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, the growth of the Post Office was a matter of such general interest and vast importance that he hesitated to criticize anything but the grants for buildings. That, however, was a point in regard to which there might be a great deal of extravagance. He rose particularly to draw attention to the item of £14,800 taken for the post office at Bristol. He understood from the account before him that £3,940 of that amount was to be spent this year. Was that so?

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he desired to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman in respect to the post office at Wandsworth. For two successive years £5,000 had been taken for a new post office at Wandsworth, but had never been spent. Last year it was said that no site could be obtained. He believed his constituents had sent in a number of sites to the Postmaster General at his request. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could say he had now selected a site.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he wished to ask how the Estimates in the cases of the 53 works referred to in the Vote were obtained? Were they obtained by open tender, and could the right hon. Gentleman give approximately the number of builders engaged upon the works? The experience of the London School Board as to the danger of allowing buildings to be constructed by two or three contractors was such that the Committee would do well to avoid falling into the same error.

MR. JACKSON said, he could answer very satisfactorily the question the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cremer) had put. The greatest care was taken to give every publicity that tenders were invited and to secure that, if in the first instance only a small number of tenders was received, every effort should be made to obtain an increased number. He had in his mind at the moment the case of Inverness. Tenders were publicly invited, but the estimates for the work were so largely in excess of the original estimate that the Treasury refused in the first instance to sanction the amount. Further inquiries were instituted and every effort made to get additional competition. He believed that in nearly every case, unless there was some substantial reason why it should not be so, the lowest tender was accepted. In every case there was open competition, and the Department took every care that the work was efficiently as well as economically performed. He assured hon. Members that the Department was very desirous to keep as far as they could within their original estimates, but very often, even after tenders were received, it was necessary to make alterations in the plans. The hon. Member for East Bristol (Mr. Handel Cossham) had asked what amount was to be expended

at Bristol in the coming year. The amount which it was expected would be expended at Bristol during the current year was £8,000—£5,400 in respect of the post services, and £2,600 for the telegraphs. He need not remind the hon. Member that that was merely a sub-division of the total sum for the purpose of keeping the accounts of the post office and telegraph services separate.

MR. PLUNKET said, that as regards the post office at Wandsworth the Postal Authorities had not yet been able to obtain a suitable site. They were doing the best they could to get one, and were most anxious to provide new postal accommodation there. Of course, until a site had been acquired the money taken could not be expended.

MR. KIMBER asked, how it was that £700 was expected to be expended during the current year?

MR. PLUNKET said, the authorities lived in hope that a site would be obtained. If a site were obtained they would proceed to prepare the necessary plans at once. His hon. Friend would be the first in the interest of his constituents to require that the work should be pushed on.

MR. KIMBER said, that £700 would certainly not cover the cost of the site required. If the authorities lived in hope of acquiring a site, why did they not take a sum sufficient to cover the cost of it?

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport) wished to say, in reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer), that it was not the case that the School Board of London only employed two or three contractors, and that the result had been unsatisfactory. They formerly employed as contractor any respectable builder who got his name on the Board's list. For years they never had less than eight or 10 builders tendering for a particular school. Lately they had thrown the tenders entirely open, and it was very doubtful whether they had gained thereby. The Board Schools had been very economically built considering the accommodation they afforded and their durable character.

SIR WALTER FOSTER said, he was slightly misunderstood by the hon. Gentleman with reference to the expenditure at Birmingham. He did not

complain of the amount of money to be spent, but complained of the fact that it was necessary after so short an interval to build another post office. As a matter of fact the stones of the present office had hardly had time to be discoloured by the smoke. He quite admitted that the site of the new office was one which was very valuable as regarded the convenience of the public. He hoped, however, that arrangements would be made whereby letters could be posted in the central street; that letters should not have to be taken down a back street as was originally the case in regard to the present post office. He should have been glad to have seen by the Estimates that more money was to be expended in other districts. There were many towns in which there was no satisfactory post office accommodation. In the town of Ilkeston for instance there was no proper post office. A certain sum of money might very usefully be spent in improving the postal accommodation there.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wondered whether the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) ever came down the street in which Coldbath Fields Prison was situated, sitting beside the driver on the top of a 'bus—["Oh, oh!"] Yes, on the top of a 'bus, because that was the whole point. In fact, he should have asked whether the hon. Gentleman had ever done this after indulging himself rather freely at the dinner table the night before, because if he had done so he must entertain a very different opinion to the one he had expressed as to the suitability of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison for a post office. In all London there was not a more dangerous or more appalling street for an omnibus to pass up or down than the street outside Coldbath Fields Prison. The street descended on one side almost perpendicularly, and the result was that even the most experienced 'bus driver and 'bus traveller trembled in every nerve whenever they were passing along the street. And this was the site which the hon. Gentleman calmly declared was most suitable for the purposes of a parcels post office! He did not think that in all London a more unsuitable site for the purpose could have been selected. He wondered how many Members of the House knew where Coldbath Fields was. If there were equal laws in England and Ireland, no

doubt some Members on the Opposition Benches would know where Coldbath Fields was. As a matter of fact, very few of those who had not been in gaol had the least idea where Coldbath Fields Prison was. It was situated in a part of London that was very distant indeed from a large number of the railway termini. How many miles was it from the Paddington station? There were several other termini in London which were very distant from Coldbath Fields. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, by way of justifying the handing over of the site, said that if they were to ask for four or five acres of land in London, they would have to pay £100,000 an acre for it. If it would be any satisfaction to the hon. Gentleman, he would admit that to get five acres together in the City of London they would require to spend at a far greater ratio, but he did not see how that would advance the hon. Gentleman's argument. If the hon. Gentleman wanted a place cheap, and one which would require very little fitting or furniture, all he needed to have done was to have walked down Victoria Street. He would find there two large sites uncovered by any building, and which had been lying idle for 10 or 15 years. If he did not want to take a vacant space, the hon. Gentleman could have taken one or two buildings which he would have found admirably suitable for the purpose of a parcels post office. These buildings had cost £60,000 or £70,000, but he had no doubt that they could be bought with the freehold for £40,000 or £50,000. Before he sat down, he desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) upon what principle the advertisements for tenders were distributed. He understood that the Patronage Secretary drew up a list of newspapers in which advertisements should be inserted, and sent it to the different Departments. How did such a system work? The newspapers were chosen mainly out of regard to political considerations. That was an altogether false principle in regard to business, and especially in regard to the business of advertising. The fact was that one guarantee a newspaper had for getting advertisements was that it was the best medium for making known to the public the facts contained in the advertisements. Circulation was the main test, though not always so, be-

Sir Walter Foster

cause a trade journal with a comparatively small circulation might be a better medium for advertising than a newspaper with a large circulation. If the head of a Department had to issue an advertisement relating to building, he naturally wished to put it in a paper through which it would reach the largest number of persons engaged in the building trade. The Minister selected a paper, and going to the Patronage Secretary said—"I want this advertisement put in such and such newspaper." The answer he would probably receive was—"That cannot be, because the paper is not on my list." If the Minister asked to see the list, he would find on it a number of small, wretched, moribund newspapers, which were, perhaps, not seen by one-tenth the number of persons who saw the paper in which he wished to insert the advertisement. He did not say this from a Party point of view at all. He believed there was no difference between the Patronage Secretary of the Liberal Party and the Patronage Secretary of the Tory Party. They both did what they considered best in the interest of their Party. But the system was an extremely bad one, and ought at once to be put an end to. The reason why this was more inexcusable now than at any other time was that they had in the Parliament of 1885 an eager discussion with regard to certain sums placed at the disposal of the Patronage Secretary. The Liberal Government was then in power, and the late Mr. Peter Rylands—who was a severe economist—protested against this money being left in the hands of the Patronage Secretary. It then turned out that the money was spent to a certain extent for electioneering purposes. With universal assent the money was taken from the disposal of the Patronage Secretary, because the state of things was regarded as an anachronism for which there was no excuse. If they used the advertisements of the State for the purpose of bolstering up moribund newspapers of their own particular side, they used the public money of the country for Party and political purposes. In the first place, he desired that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury should give them the list of the papers which were so highly favoured by the State as to have a monopoly of the public advertisements; and, in the

second place, he should be glad if the hon. Gentleman would inform them on what principle the list was made up.

MR. PLUNKET said, that perhaps it would narrow the discussion which had been very widely started by the hon. Member if he said that so far as the advertisements touching the Estimates they were now considering were concerned—the advertisements which were under the control of the Office of Works—the Department were not entirely guided by the list which was sent to them from time to time by the Treasury. They took the advice of the Surveyor of the district where the buildings were situated as to the papers in which it was most desirable to advertise, and if by any chance a newspaper recommended by the Surveyor did not appear on the Treasury List, the Office of Works would insert the advertisement in the newspaper all the same. Advertisements were given to newspapers entirely independently of politics.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, that the alpine descent at Coldbath Fields, which was referred to by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was being remedied. The valley was being bridged over by a new street running to the "Angel" at Islington from the Holborn Town Hall. As regarded the general position of the site, in his opinion no better spot could possibly have been selected, having regard to the great railway systems in the immediate vicinity. It suited the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) to ignore the fact that within 200 yards of Coldbath Fields there were the termini of three great railways—namely, the Great Northern, the Midland, and the London and North-Western. He (Mr. Isaacs) congratulated the Post Office upon having the good sense and the good fortune to acquire so eligible a site for the Parcels Post Office.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Does the hon. Gentleman mean to say that the Midland is within 200 yards of Coldbath Fields?

MR. ISAACS: It is certainly within 300 or 400 yards of the site.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, there was a great increase in the Estimates this year for buildings. He should have been glad if the right

hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) had been in his place to defend, if by any language it could be defended, this most important item of expenditure, which was growing at an alarming rate, and, he believed, growing out of all proportion to the increased revenue which they derived from it. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) had bewailed the very heavy cost of buildings, but had said the inflation of the total cost was due to the very high price which was to be paid for sites. Then the hon. Gentleman said it was necessary for the post office business that sites should be selected in very expensive districts. Of course, due weight must be given to that consideration; but he had some ground for believing that in some cases prices had been paid for sites which need not have been, and which ought not to have been, paid. He suggested that in the future re-arrangement of the Estimates the cost of sites should be given separately.

Mr. JACKSON said, the cost of sites was set forth separately.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he did not allude only to the Vote now before them. There was only one other remark which he desired to make, and it had reference to the Coldbath Fields site. As he understood, the Post Office had had a windfall this year in the shape of a free site. Of course, so far as the taxpayer was concerned, there would be no advantage in one Department paying over a sum of money to another Department; but from another point of view it was extremely important that the value of the site should appear in the post office accounts, because if it did not appear they would be misled in comparing one year with another, and the right hon. Gentleman the present Postmaster General might receive credit for economy which he might not deserve.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that the discussion of this Vote was a perfect waste of time; the debate was a farce. He asked any hon. Member who doubted his assertion to look at pages 37, 38, 39, and 40 of the Estimates. These were four pages which affected to give the House information as to why money was wanted and how it was spent. There was a column for the original Estimate; there was a column for the revised Estimate in each

case; there was a column for the gross amount of the previous Votes and re-Votes; and there was a column for the total amount expended up to the 31st of December, 1887. Upon looking down these pages they found that every case in which money had been expended up to the 31st of December, 1887, represented a re-Vote—that was to say, that in the first year there was no expenditure at all in connection with the item which Parliament was asked to sanction. The sums were voted again, and then a sum of money was spent. But they had a very large number of cases last year set forth in detail, indicating what the Post Office intended to do with the money the House granted, and none of that money, or almost none, had been spent in the financial year. The money which was expended up to the end of December, 1887, was money which had been voted and re-voted. The whole thing was a perfect farce. The fact was, that the House was treated to an elaborate list of sites and of projected buildings, and it passed some hundreds of thousands of pounds. The money was handed over to the Postmaster General; but the right hon. Gentleman and the Post Office officials never paid the least attention to the statements in the Estimates. If it suited them to do so they proceeded with the buildings which were mentioned in certain cases in the Estimates; but if they found in the course of the year that certain other sites were more eligible or that certain other buildings were required, they felt perfectly at liberty to spend the money granted by Parliament upon them. It was just as well the proceedings of the Committee should be of a practical and serious nature. It would be business-like to say—"We will give the Postmaster General £100,000 to spend on buildings which the circumstances of the moment may prove to be useful or necessary or best;" but to set this list before the Committee as anything like a trustworthy list of the ways in which the sums of money would be expended, was merely throwing dust in the eyes of the public. What he proposed was that the Committee should not waste any more time over these details, because they could not possibly do any good. The Post Office Authorities had spent money on sites and buildings not mentioned in the

Mr. Pickersgill

Estimates. There never had been Estimates submitted to the House which bore on the face of them so many proofs of careful pruning as these did; it was perfectly clear that these Estimates had been subjected to a most vigorous examination by the Secretary to the Treasury; but, at the same time, he regretted the blot he had mentioned and which had been perceptible for years was perceptible in the present Estimates.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the Committee were entitled to an answer to the allegation made by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). The statement made by the hon. Gentleman was that it had been the habit of the Committee to vote sums of money for sites and buildings, but that if the Post Office did not choose to erect the buildings it spent the money in erecting other buildings. If that be the case, it was obvious it was a perfect farce, nay, an insult to the Committee, to submit Estimates for specific buildings. Before they voted this money, the Committee ought to require an assurance from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) that if the money was not spent as intended it would not be expended at all.

Mr. JACKSON said, he could, without the slightest hesitation, give that assurance. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had been pleased to say that the present Estimates bore evidences of having been carefully considered. He thought he could satisfy the hon. Gentleman that if the practice which he mentioned was ever in vogue it was not likely to be put in force during the coming year at any rate. The hon. Gentleman would remember that the question came up before the Public Accounts Committee, and that he (Mr. Jackson) endeavoured to explain to the Committee some of the measures taken to secure that the expenditure was not only kept within the limit of the Parliamentary Vote, but also kept to the purposes of the Parliamentary Vote. As a matter of fact, every item of expenditure must come to the Treasury for sanction, and one of the first questions he required to be answered before he gave consent was—"Has provision been made in the Estimates for this expenditure?" The hon. Member would admit that if that practice was carried out, expenditure must be kept

within the amount voted by Parliament, and devoted to the purposes for which Parliament intended it. He assured the hon. Member that the greatest care was taken to ensure that expenditure was kept within the amount sanctioned and appropriated to the purposes intended.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was afraid the answer of the hon. Gentleman was calculated to lead the House to suppose that he had stated what he had no warrant for. He admitted that Treasury sanction was obtained to every building, and that the total Vote was not exceeded. But the buildings specified in the Estimates were not proceeded with. Totally different works were undertaken, completed, and paid for within the financial year, to those mentioned to Parliament. He did not complain that the Vote was exceeded. He did not complain that any money not voted by Parliament was spent by the Post Office or the Inland Revenue or the Customs Departments buildings; but what he contended was that the elaborate statement of detail which was submitted to the Committee was perfectly untrustworthy as to the way in which the money was likely to be spent.

Vote agreed to.

(9.) £23,875, to complete the sum for County Court Buildings.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £12,756, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Metropolitan Police Court Buildings."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he rose to move the reduction of the Vote, of which he was sorry that a considerable portion had been already taken. This money was asked for the Metropolitan Police Courts. In many towns in the country the Police Courts were paid for from the local rates, and he could see no reason why those towns should pay not only for their own but also for the Police Courts of the richest City in any country of the world. They had a Local Government Bill brought in, and he had looked to see whether there was in it any arrangement for the cost of these Courts being thrown upon the rates of the Metropolis; but he found no such provision, although in that Bill it was

proposed to give far more relief to the ratepayers than had been given before. He had always been told, when this question was raised on previous occasions, to wait until the Local Government Bill for London came in, that the charge was monstrous, and that the cost of these police buildings was to be thrown upon the Metropolis. But the Local Government Bill had been brought in, and its operation applied to London, but there was nothing in it to throw this expense on the Metropolis. There was an additional reason why this Vote should be refused. The Treasury, feeling that the Vote was an injustice, tried to keep it down to the lowest possible point, and the consequence was that the Police Courts were a positive disgrace to the Metropolis. Prisoners, both male and female, were put together, and the cells were overrun with vermin. Hon. Members who represented the Metropolis, and the public also, might be assured that they would not have good Police Courts until the Metropolitan districts paid for their Police Courts from their own rates. He had never heard any argument in favour of the Metropolitan Police Courts being paid for out of local taxation; on the contrary, he had always heard the present system spoken of as one which must, when the Local Government Bill was introduced, be swept away; and he thought that on this occasion they ought to encourage the Government to bring in a measure for the purpose by dividing against the present Vote, which he should oppose.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, that under an Act of Parliament now in existence it was necessary to provide funds for the Metropolitan Police Courts, to ensure that they were properly prepared for the purpose for which they were intended. With regard to the general charge of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Labouchere) that the Courts were a disgrace to the Metropolis, he could only say that it appeared too sweeping, although, if any particular instance were brought forward, showing that any individual building was inadequate and unsatisfactory in its accommodation, the complaint would, of course, receive consideration. He would remind the hon. Gentleman that there

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was a demand made last year for additional cells at Hammersmith, and it was for that reason that a sum of £2,200 was asked for in the present Estimates.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he had to call attention to the item of £2,200 for additional cells at the Hammersmith Police Court. The hon. Member for Fulham (Mr. Fisher) and himself had last year pointed out that the accommodation at that Court was very bad indeed, both with respect to prisoners and to the witnesses waiting to be heard. He now asked whether this sum included provision for buildings other than cells which were necessary for the proper accommodation of all who were required to be present at the Court?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) was mistaken in supposing that the Hammersmith Police Court was the only one about which complaints had been made. He believed he was right in stating that the majority of the Police Courts in the Metropolis were without anything like decent accommodation for those who were charged. The fact was, that those unfortunate persons were put into cells that were foul and filthy to a degree that would disgrace any city, and especially so the greatest City in the world. He agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in the remarks he had made, and should follow him into the Lobby if he divided the Committee on his Amendment.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he was not prepared to admit that the accommodation for untried prisoners at the Metropolitan Police Courts was so bad as the hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) supposed; but that it was not altogether satisfactory was shown by the fact that his right hon. Friend (Mr. Matthews) had last year re-appointed a Departmental Committee for the purpose of examining the state of the cells, which Committee had been originally constituted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The Committee had been sitting since September last; its Chairman was Mr. Justice Wills, and there was upon it Mr.

Du Cane and the Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Derbyshire. Hon. Members would see that the Committee was eminently qualified to form an adequate judgment in this matter. They paid personal visits to all those places which required to be inspected; and he happened to know that on the day after Boxing Day the learned Judge personally inspected the places set apart for night charges. The Government were expecting the Report of the Committee daily; and the sum of money referred to by the hon. and gallant Member (General Goldsworthy) had been inserted in the Estimates in order to improve the general accommodation at the Hammersmith Police Court.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he hoped the Committee would look a little more closely into this Vote, because not only were they asked for the present sum, but by granting it they would be pledging themselves to future expenditure. He thought that some small grant-in-aid should be given in the case of the Bow Street Police Court, because it had some International duties to perform; but that the Courts of Hammersmith and Wandsworth should be paid for by towns like Birmingham and Manchester, who had their own Police Courts to provide and maintain, was indefensible. They were pledging themselves to build a new Court for Dalston, estimated to cost £8,000, by the Vote of £2,000 that was now asked for on account, and he said it was outrageous that the taxpayers should have to pay for the existing Courts, and much more so for a new Court in a fresh district of the Metropolis. He trusted that, unless they had some assurance from the Government that this would be the last time the Vote would appear, the Committee would give a strong Vote against it, for that was the only way in which they could express their views on the subject.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury as to whether it was not high time this Vote disappeared from the Estimates. The only way to effect that was to deal with the matter as they had dealt with the Vote for the London Parks on a former occasion, when it was decided that they should be maintained at the cost of the Metropolis. It was not possible that anyone could

contend that the towns in the country, the smallest of which maintained its own Police Court, should, in addition, be taxed to maintain the Police Courts of the Metropolis. What on earth had Sheffield or Birmingham to do with the cost of building a new Police Court, say, for instance, at Dalston? It seemed to him to be out of all reason that this system should be continued, and he trusted that the First Lord of the Treasury and the President of the Local Government Board would make up their minds that it should now come to an end. He did not think they could object to the present Vote for the maintenance of existing Police Courts; but he should certainly go into the Lobby to support a Motion for the reduction of the Vote in regard to the purchase of a site and the cost of building a new Police Court for Dalston.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that as a Metropolitan Member he agreed that London ought to pay for its own Police Courts, and he hoped it would do so before long. But he thought it premature to say that this Vote should be cut down before the Local Government Bill was passed, as it undoubtedly would be, when they could hand over the cost of the Metropolitan Police Courts to the new London Authority. At the present time, however, he thought they must carry out the Act of Parliament, and pass the Vote on the understanding that when the new Act came into force, an alteration would be made, and the Police Courts dealt with in the same way as they had dealt with the expenditure on the London Parks.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield had expressed his present views with regard to this Vote; but it might have been well if, when he was a Member of a former Government which was responsible for a similar expenditure, he had used the same arguments. He (Mr. Ritchie) ventured to think that this question was one which ought to be raised when the Local Government Bill came forward for discussion. The Government were acting now by authority of the Act of Parliament, and so long as it was in force, they had no choice but to continue such provision as they con-

sidered necessary for the proper maintenance of the London Police Courts. There were, however, one or two considerations in connection with the subject to which he thought hon. Gentleman had not given sufficient attention. It was true that in the Provinces the maintenance of the Police Courts was regarded as a local affair, but London had always been considered as somewhat different from local towns, however considerable they might be. Large masses of the people migrated to London to a degree that was not found in any other town in the Kingdom. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Labouchere) had said that a large number of those persons contributed to the rates, but it was certain that a still larger number of them were a burden on the rates. Indeed, the increase of pauperism, especially in the winter months, was caused by people who migrated to the Metropolis and became a burden on the rates. There was also another point to which the hon. Member had not alluded. The fees in the Police Courts in London were paid into the Exchequer; whereas those of the Provincial Courts went into the local funds. That was a very important portion of the case, and although he did not say that the fees covered the whole expenditure, the fact remained. The Government, as he had stated, were just now proceeding under Act of Parliament, and it was incumbent upon them to come to the House for the expenditure which they considered to be necessary for the maintenance of the Metropolitan Police Courts.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) was right in saying that the Vote was submitted to the Committee under Act of Parliament; but it was for the Committee to say whether they would vote the money or not. The Act did not, in any way, engage that Committee to Vote the money asked for every year for the maintenance of these Police Courts. Again, it was no argument in favour of their continuing to pay for these Courts, to say that the fees were paid into the Exchequer. He could not go into the plea of migration; but he did not believe there was any such migration to Dalston as the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of, and the right hon. Gentleman would have to go far to prove that the Exchequer ought to give

a grant in aid for the Dalston Police Court, because it would be engaged in cases unconnected with the district. The right hon. Gentleman said that the matter ought to be discussed when the Local Government Bill was in Committee. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken precisely the same view in his proposals; but he (Mr. Labouchere) would keep the matter in mind. In the meantime he proposed that they should agree to the Vote for the existing Police Courts, but that they should refuse the Vote for the £6,000 for the purchase of a site and for new buildings at Dalston.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,756, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Labouchere.)

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said, he did not think the hon. Member (Mr. Labouchere) had considered what would be the result of the rejection of this Vote. There was no other authority in London which had power to raise money and which would be bound to provide Police Courts in the Metropolis, and the effect of the rejection of the Vote would be that the administration of criminal justice could no longer be carried on. He submitted that that would be the case. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had stated that a large burden was thrown upon the Metropolitan rates by the migration which took place from the provinces to London, and he (Mr. Kimber) believed there was one Union which, at the present time, supported permanently 700 or 800 paupers who had migrated to the Metropolis. That, he said, fully bore out the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that not only did the persons who come up from the Country to London not pay rates, but that in many cases they constituted a great burden upon them. It was a matter which ought not to be taken for granted that the cost of the police in the Metropolis ought to follow the same rule as in the country, and be borne entirely by the locality—the Metropolis. It ought at least to be discussed, whether or not the Metropolis was in a different position from that of other towns. It was admitted that the question was one of justice, and as the cost of the administration of Civil justice in the Metro-

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polis was borne by the State at large, the same principle might be shown to be applicable, to some extent at least, to the administration of criminal justice.

MR. MUNDELLA said, there was no danger of the failure of the administration of criminal justice at Dalston from the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), because the Vote made provision for a temporary Court there. He thought the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie) was reduced to a very bare extremity when he appealed to him (Mr. Mundella) to know why, when he was President of the Committee of Council on Education, he had not pressed the abolition of this Vote on the Government of which he was a Member. The right hon. Gentleman, he thought, knew better than to think such an argument applied, and if he were to ask the right hon. Gentleman why, when he was Secretary to the Admiralty, he had not introduced a Local Government Bill, he should be answering him in the spirit of his own remarks. All that they asked was that they should not be committed to this new expenditure, and the right hon. Gentleman himself had practically admitted that the Vote was indefensible.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that seven years ago a Committee, under the presidency of Lord Rosebery, recommended in their Report, dated the 30th of December, 1881, the erection of a Police Court at Dalston as a matter of urgent necessity, in order to relieve the pressure of business in other parts of the Metropolis. Since that time there had been growing complaints of the insufficiency of Police Court accommodation, and as hon. Members would be aware, the condition of things at Wandsworth and Hammersmith had become almost intolerable. The arrangement was made in order to utilize the magistrate at Dalston, and thus with only one additional magistrate to work Hammersmith and Wandsworth as whole-day Courts; but if the Dalston Court was not established with its complement of magistrates, they would not be able to carry out the arrangement. He pointed out that a contract for the site had already been

entered into in pursuance of the law, and the Government were under an obligation to pay the amount of the purchase money—£4,000.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) said, he understood from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Matthews) that the Government had signed a contract pledging the House to an expenditure of £4,000 for the purchase of a site for a new building at Dalston. Such a proceeding would not be allowed in any Town Council. It was not right that the House of Commons should be pressed to assent to an expenditure incurred without authority by the Government for the erection of a Police Court at Dalston. He thought the argument of the Home Secretary was therefore beside the question, and they still contended that the cost in the present instance should be borne by the inhabitants of the Metropolis. In his opinion this was the right time to protest against this expenditure. The condition of things at Dalston had gone on for some time, and no harm would be done if the matter stood over a little longer. The whole system was vicious, under which localities in the country were called on to pay for what ought to be borne by the inhabitants of London, and he considered it a disgrace that the Metropolis should not, by the proper management of its own affairs, copy the example of other towns in such matters as this.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, he felt no hesitation in supporting this Motion. The burdens on the citizens of London were heavy; but he thought they were willing to make this payment in order to secure thereby the control of the Metropolitan Police Courts. When that was obtained he thought it would emphasize the anomaly which now deprived them of the control of the Metropolitan Police.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, if the contract had already been signed, and if it was binding on the Government for the purchase of the new site at Dalston?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, the contract was certainly morally, if not legally, binding on the Government. With regard to the question whether the contract had been signed, he would point out that that was a matter that was not in his Department.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he understood that the contract was completed, and if it was not carried out it would be necessary to give some compensation.

Mr. DODDS (Stockton) said, the question was whether any contract had been signed. He contended that a contract of this kind should be provisional, and only be binding on the assumption that the House of Commons voted the funds. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had said that the recommendation with regard to the Dalston Police Court had been made seven years ago, and that being so, he (Mr. Dodds) thought the matter might be allowed to remain over for another year. He was somewhat surprised to hear the President of the Local Government Board speak in the way he had of migration from the provinces to London. He (Mr. Dodds) had always understood that that migration, so far from burdening the people of the Metropolis with expenditure, really caused a large amount of money to be spent in London. [Mr. RITCHIE: I spoke of paupers.] He protested that they had in the country to find enough money already, without being burdened with the cost of new Police Buildings in the suburbs of London. Although the Government had said they were proceeding by authority of Act of Parliament, that Act did not prevent hon. Members from expressing their opinion on this Vote, and he trusted that the majority would decide that, as in the case of the Parks, London should maintain its own Police Courts.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, he did not see why, by voting this sum now, they should involve themselves in an expenditure of £10,000 in the future. With regard to the contract, he did not see what business the Government had to enter into any contract for the purchase of a site; in the second place, he did not believe the contract was binding; and, thirdly, he thought if it was, it would be much better to sell the land.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that when two or three years ago, he had urged upon the Government to consider the condition of the Hammersmith and Wandsworth Police Courts, he was told by the then Secretary to the Treasury, that the Government avoided any responsibility

in the matter, because the Police Courts would be taken over by the Local Government Authority, and on that distinct ground no steps were taken.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he should support the Amendment by way of protest against the practice of making contracts to bind the House before the subject matters were considered. He believed the day would come when business men on the other side of the House would be very grateful to hon. Members on these Benches for having raised this question.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY said, that the Government had, in his opinion, done right in securing a site for the Police Court at Dalston.

Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.) said, that when a County Member he had voted against this principle, and he saw no reason why, having since become a Metropolitan Member, he should alter his views. The inhabitants of London were desirous of having the control of their own affairs, and the maintenance of their Police Courts was a matter which he thought they ought to pay for. He should vote for the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere).

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 48; Noes 87: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. DODDS said, he felt it was only reasonable at such an hour, seeing the extraordinary length of time the Chairman had been in the Chair—indeed, during the years he had been in the House he hardly remembered a longer Sitting in Supply—it was reasonable to suppose the time had come to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(Mr. Dodds.)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he could hardly imagine the hon. Gentleman was serious in making a proposal of the kind. True, the House met at 3 o'clock; but the Chairman of Committees had not been in the Chair for eight hours, and, even

if that were so, it would not be reasonable for the Committee to cease work until 12 o'clock, the hour the House had agreed upon for closing discussion. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not proceed with a Motion that could not be entertained.

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he would appeal to his hon. Friend not to persist with his Motion. True, the Chairman had been in the Chair nearly eight hours, but that was no reason why the Committee should not continue to sit till 12 o'clock.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(11.) £9,250, to complete the sum to defray half cost for Sheriff Court Houses in Scotland.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he did not thoroughly understand this Vote; but the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) being in his place, would no doubt give a lucid explanation of it. He (Mr. Labouchere) gathered that the House was bound to contribute a certain amount towards the maintenance of certain Courts in Scotland called Sheriffs' Courts. So far, so good; he did not complain of fulfilling that obligation by voting a certain sum; but what he would like to know, in the first place, was why the Vote, which last year was £7,570 for that purpose, should this year be £8,150? Why, too, when the obligation was to contribute to the maintenance, was the Committee asked to vote a sum for new works? Why should the whole sum be increased on that of last year by £4,000? This the Committee would see required some explanation.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) said, in addition he should like to ask some explanation of particulars under Sub-Head B. There was no detailed information in the Estimates as to the expenditure on each Court House. The whole sum distributed among 52 Court Houses would give to each an average of £275, and this seemed to him a high figure for the maintenance of old buildings together with the grant for new buildings.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he should like to know why no provision was made for a Court House at Kirkcaldy, that being by far

the most popular and important town between the Forth and the Tay, and yet the only Court House was at Cupar. The strongest representations had been made in favour of a Court being held at Kirkcaldy, where lately police cells and every accommodation had been provided.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, that the increase in the Vote was due to alterations and improvements and drainage at Hamilton and elsewhere, long required, and now proceeded with. The sum of £4,700 would complete the payments for the year.

Vote *agreed to*.

(12.) £183,000, to complete the sum for Surveys of the United Kingdom.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to ask, first, for information as to the progress of the work of the Survey in Ireland; secondly, whether there was any system of taking stock established whereby the officer in charge could know what amount of stock he had on hand and how much was required—he referred to theodolites and other instruments of great value—and also he would ask under what system the Department obtained stores, whether by private tender or open competition?

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, N.) said, he should like to know what provision was intended to be made for the work of revision of survey. As a matter of fact, he believed the work of the Ordnance Survey began in England with the counties around London, and the revision of the old maps had been going on for some time. In Scotland, the Ordnance Survey came later; but still there were counties—Fife and Mid Lothian, for instance—that were surveyed as far back as the years between 1840-50. The maps then produced were now quite out of date; but they might easily be kept up to date without any large expense by an efficient staff or a regular system. More than once this point had been raised in the House, and the answer given as regards Scotland was that the first survey being concluded some years ago, the head office had been shut up and the materials removed, so it would appear there was absolutely no provision made for the revision of the

survey of Scotland at the present time. This might easily be provided by an automatic system brought into play without any great expenditure or increase of staff, and such was carried out in the United States, in Austria, and other European countries. Another point had been brought on previous occasions before the House, and also the other House, and it was a point in which considerable interest was taken in all parts of the United Kingdom, and particularly in Scotland. The matter was brought before the House of Lords three or four years ago by Lord Balfour of Burleigh. He referred to the incomplete state of the survey of the country as compared with other countries at the present time. The great object of the Ordnance Survey, apart from purposes of estate valuation, was to describe correctly the geographical contour of the country. The Survey maps, therefore, in the surface contour gave the different heights, but they did not complete the work by giving the depths of the depressions and the soundings of lakes and rivers. In the Survey maps of the United States the depths of lakes were recorded, and the same thing was found in Switzerland, and he believed in Italian and Austrian maps; and this had been urged on the Government with respect to the maps of Great Britain. There could be no doubt of its interest and value scientifically, and from other points of view. As a matter of fact, the body which took the most prominent part in urging this work was the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and the only two complete surveys of lakes in the United Kingdom were those of Loch Awe and Loch Lomond, taken 40 or 50 years ago by the Admiralty. When this point had been urged before the Treasury, the Department of Works replied it was work for the Admiralty, while the Admiralty said it came within the province of the Department of Works. He did not care which Department undertook the work; but to make our survey complete and worthy to stand on a level with the surveys of other countries, the contour and depths of the lakes should be laid down as well as the height of mountains. It was of interest and of value scientifically to know, from what had been done long ago in relation to Loch Lomond, that there was there a depth of over 100

fathoms a depth not equalled in any arm of the sea on the West Coast of Scotland, and only found in ocean soundings. Private investigation had shown even greater depths; for instance, Loch Morar, in the West of Inverness-shire, gave 180 fathoms, a depth not attained in any but ocean waters. The greatest interest would be found in the comparison of depths with other lakes, like those of Ireland, spreading over large surfaces, and it was a matter well worth the attention of the Government, whether it was not desirable to make provision for making our survey complete.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff) said, he could support the observations of the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh, and extend them by saying that this survey of the lakes was of more immediate importance than the object of ascertaining the geographical contour of the country. He had himself in years past had occasion to make use of the Swiss Survey maps, in which all detailed information was given as to the depths of lakes, and had found this information most useful for engineering purposes. But when he came to our own Ordnance maps he found the whole of the lakes a blank, and civil engineers were deprived of that data so useful for them in the preparation of plans, and which they might fairly expect to find in a survey of the kind. This, and the question of adopting an automatic method of bringing maps up to date, were matters of great importance. He did not believe that the originators of the costly system of Ordnance Survey contemplated simply a record of the state of the country at one particular period; they surely must have had in their minds an idea of keeping up the information at regular intervals. He hoped that on these points the suggestions made would have serious attention, with good results.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he would suggest the desirability of marking the heights above the sea on the Survey stones. The figures appeared on the maps; but it would be interesting and useful to have them really recorded on the spot. A traveller would not have to write for a map, and wait until he could receive it; he would have this interesting information before him on his journey. In many parts of Europe this information

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was recorded in localities, often at railway stations.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would include in his answers some information in reference to the salary of the Director of Survey. Last year that salary appeared as £870, but now it was suddenly raised to £1,200. It did not appear that this gentleman was entitled to such an increase, for he drew an extra sum of £400 for work done for the Local Government Boundary Commission, together with some £500 for retired pay.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, the expenditure had reached a very large amount, and he hoped that the account of the progress made would indicate the completion of the work soon.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, there was very little hope that we should be able to rival the United States Departments in this and other statistical matters. The United States were immeasurably ahead of us. It was a pleasure to see the amount of care bestowed upon obtaining such information by the Statistical Department at Washington. Still, though we might not be able to overtake the United States, he thought, considering the extent of the expenditure, our Ordnance maps might be more complete. Take the County of Fife; there was not an Ordnance map for professional purposes available; it was too small, and it was altogether out of date and useless for modern purposes by landowners and others. He knew of landowners who, when they had to deal with estates, were obliged to have a survey made for themselves.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. PLUNKET) (Dublin University) said, he would endeavour to reply so far as he could to the several questions asked. First, the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) asked as to the progress of the Irish Survey. This had now been ordered to be carried out with maps of 25-inch scale instead of the old 6-inch scale. This was pressed upon the Department in former discussions on the Estimates, and was now being done. In the next place, the hon. Member asked whether stock had been taken of the various materials in the possession

of the Department, a question he had raised on a previous occasion. The hon. Member would see it was not possible to take stock of all materials at the same time; but a system had been adopted by means of which stock was taken of each particular class of materials, and in that way he believed they would be able to arrive in the course of the year at the amount of stock. Then the hon. Member asked as to the system of contracts for stores, and here he (Mr. Plunket) had to say that it was not possible to pursue the same system as was adopted in other Departments; materials and instruments being of the most delicate and complicated nature. It had been found practically impossible to adopt a system of open competition for these contracts. As to the salary of the Director, he explained that the apparent increase was due to the sum of £1,200 representing the consolidated salary hitherto partly paid under this Vote, and partly by military pay. This sum represented the whole of the salary. As to the observations by the hon. and learned Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), he (Mr. Plunket) could only say they should have every attention, though he confessed he did not quite understand what the hon. and learned Member meant by an automatic system of revision. A re-survey was as often as practicable carried out without incurring a large expenditure.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he desired to know whether Scotland was to have the 25-inch maps, or was to continue with the old 6-inch maps?

MR. BUCHANAN said, he did not mean to suggest any detailed plan when he spoke of automatic revision. What he complained of was that many Scotch counties were only completed on the 6-inch scale, and practically at the present moment there was no revision at all of the old maps, and many of the 1-inch maps were not yet published, or likely to be published this year. The appeal for a revised issue was refused before the Office was closed, and now it was said the Office being closed, and made over to the Post Office, nothing more could be done. The right hon. Gentleman had said nothing about the survey of lakes in Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom. He was informed that it could be carried out at a very small cost. He had had an op-

portunity of speaking on the subject with a naval officer who had been engaged on many Government surveying expeditions, and he said, referring to his experiences on the West Coast of Scotland and Ireland, that if directed to survey and lay down soundings on the lakes, this could be done by boats' crews in the middle of their ordinary sea work of surveying along the coast. The cost would be little, the result would be of the greatest value for scientific and engineering purposes, and also for navigation purposes. Even the lochs that constituted the Caledonian Canal had had no regular Ordnance survey; only a rough survey by private effort gave incompletely the general average of depth.

MR. PLUNKET said, he would inquire into the matter, which, so far as he knew, was suggested now for the first time.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, the right hon. Gentleman had explained that the £1,200 for the Director represented the consolidated salary; but was there not also £400 for services on the Local Government Board Boundary Commission?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, the explanation which, until now he had not understood, was, that the asterisk was misplaced, owing to a slip of the printer; it should appear by the Major General's name, not that of the Director.

MR. BRUNNER said, he hoped that his request would not be passed over as too trivial.

MR. PLUNKET said, certainly he would bear it in mind, and have inquiry made.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, a note referred to the sum realized from the sale of maps, and it was a matter of importance to consider that these maps were sold at an excessively high price, on the principle of large profits and small sales. To many persons these maps would be useful, and he believed the Government would realize quite as much from sales if they considerably reduced the price to the public. Having made the original outlay, and got the proofs, any number might be produced. Everyone who had experience of printing knew that after the first cost the expense of printing machinery and ink did not amount to much.

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If the Government would be content with a profit of some 33 per cent, they would largely increase their sale, and benefit a large number of the community.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the erection and maintenance (including rents, &c.) of Buildings for the Department of Science and Art."

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he must object to this Vote going through without discussion. He had something to say in regard to it, and hoped Progress would be now reported.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*),—put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

COPYRIGHT (MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS) BILL.—[BILL 166.]

(*Mr. Addison, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Lawson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Plaintiff to recover such damages (less than 40s.) as the court or judge may deem just).

On the Motion of MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 9, leave out "passed," and insert "of the Session held;" and in line 11, leave out "law," and insert "laws."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 2 (Costs to be in the discretion of the judge).

On the Motion of MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 25, after "tried," insert "and section four of 'The Copyright (Musical Compositions) Act, 1882,' is hereby repealed."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Proprietor not wilfully permitting such performance to be exempt).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, line 26, leave out, "or places;" in line 27, leave out, "or places;" and in page 2, line 6, after "performance," insert "knowing it to be unauthorised."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 4 (Definition).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, Clause *struck out*.

Clause 5 *agreed to*.

Clause 6 (Extent of Act).

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 13, leave out "extend only to England and Wales," and insert "not extend to Scotland or Ireland."—(Mr. Attorney General.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, why this limitation was introduced.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, personally he should prefer that the Bill should extend to Ireland and Scotland, for he believed it would in both countries prove a very useful measure. He did not wish to introduce controversial matter, and therefore had not included Ireland, but would be quite ready to meet the wishes of Irish Members. He might say that among his correspondence on the subject he had had complaints from persons who in Ireland had been victims of the system of blackmail the Bill would stop.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) said, he had no objection to the words "or Ireland" being struck out, his only object in proposing the Amendment was to carry out the intention of the promoters in the usual Parliamentary form. He expressed no opinion whatever as to the desirability of extending the Bill to Ireland or Scotland. As a matter of drafting, if that policy were adopted the clause should be struck out altogether.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the object of the Bill, as he understood it, was to prevent a system of fraud and blackmail pursued by a limited number of persons, and he could see no reason why the Bill should not apply to Ireland.

MR. ADDISON said, he should be very glad to omit the clause.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, if there was any advantage in the Bill, Scotland had a fair claim to share in it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

On the Motion of Mr. ADDISON, Clause *struck out* of the Bill.

Preamble *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th April, 1888.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—considered in Committee — CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS I. — PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 14 to 20, 23, 25 to 27; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 1 to 4

Resolutions [April 5] reported.

PRIVATE BILL (by Order)—Withdrawn—South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways (Arbitration).*

PUBLIC BILLS — Ordered — First Reading — Moveable Abodes* [200].

Second Reading—Pharmacy Acts Amendment [House counted out].

Committee—Report—Customs (Isle of Man)* [195].

MOTION.

MOVEABLE ABODES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to provide for the registration and regulation of travelling vans or other vehicles used as Temporary Abodes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Hozier.

Bill presented, and read the first time. [Bill 200.]

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SEWERAGE WORKS—INCIDENCE OF COST.

MR. MOWBRAY (Lancashire, Prestwich) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is the case that the extra expense caused to a Sanitary Authority in carrying out a scheme of sewerage for a district, by reason of the drainage of county build-

ings, such as lunatic asylums situated within the district, falls wholly upon the local rates of such district; and, whether such buildings are assessed to the local rates of the district only on the agricultural value of the land without the buildings; and whether, if so, he could see his way to insert provisions either in the Local Government Bill or in the Lunacy Bill to remedy such a state of things, and to make such extra expense a charge upon the General County Rate?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The cost of general works of sewerage in the district of a Sanitary Authority, including those which are required for a lunatic asylum situated within the district, is defrayed out of the local rates. The lands and buildings acquired for the purpose of a pauper lunatic asylum are not liable to be assessed to local rates at a higher value than that at which they were assessed at the time of their acquisition. A clause altering the law in this respect would not be germane to the provisions of the Local Government Bill; but an opportunity will arise for my hon. Friend to raise the question of the assessment of asylums when the Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill is before the House. The Government are willing to consider the matter in connection with that Bill.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON HORSES.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can see his way to permit medical men to keep at least one horse each free of Horse Tax?

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the right hon Gentleman, Whether such horses as were used by medical men, more especially by country doctors, for professional purposes, might not be described rather as trade than as pleasure horses; and whether it was not the fact that such men, although they used, did not abuse the roads, inasmuch as they drove very light traps?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I find that there is a precedent for such an exemption as the hon. Member's Question suggests. Up

to 1869-70, when the Horse Tax stood at one guinea, doctors and ministers of religion paid only half the duty, and this continued till the duty was reduced to 10s. 6d. for everybody. The question whether one horse ought to be exempted in the case of doctors and ministers of religion is receiving the most careful consideration of the Government; but it must not be forgotten that exemptions are almost always of an insidious nature, and that it is difficult, when once you begin making exemptions from any duty, to know where to draw the line. There is some force in the observation of the hon. Member opposite (Dr. Farquharson) that doctors in the country districts do, to a certain extent, come under the definition of "traders." I must take this opportunity of reminding the House that the question of exemptions from Horse or Wheel Tax, and, indeed, the question of these taxes generally, is one between the interests of persons using horses and carts and that of the general body of ratepayers. It is not a question between the former and the National Exchequer. I mention this, because I see that in many quarters the idea still prevails that these taxes are in some way connected with the reduction of 1d. in the Income Tax. At the same time, the Government feel that it is essential that these taxes, purely local as they are, should be placed upon the justest possible basis.

MR. CHANNING asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman had also considered the case of farmers' horses?

MR. GOSCHEN said, he was giving that matter his most careful consideration. What he was anxious to do was to carry out the view that what the French called "horses of luxury" were to be taxed; but that horses required for any particular trade should not be taxed. That was the theory of the tax, and he hoped it might be carried out in that sense and in that spirit.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—TAX ON CARTS AND WHEELS.

MR. GENT-DAVIS (Lambeth, Kennington) (for Mr. KELLY) (Camberwell, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the very serious remonstrances which have appeared in the public Press, and which have been addressed to him, against the proposed new taxes on carts and wheels,

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he has any intention of abandoning them, or, at any rate, so modifying them as to prevent their proving an oppressive tax upon industry, and being the means of throwing a very large number of artisans, more especially in the van-building and wheelwright trades, out of work.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman adhered to his Estimate of £300,000 as the produce of the Wheel and Cart Tax; and, whether he was aware that, outside official circles, it was almost universally considered that the Estimate was much too low?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, he was quite prepared in the case of this tax, as in others, to listen to all the remonstrances that might be made; but a great many of those remonstrances which he had seen had been somewhat exaggerated—such, for instance, as the suggestion that artisans in the van-building and wheelwright trades would be thrown out of work. The hon. Member dealt with two questions, which were really distinct—the small Wheel Tax which was proposed, and the heavier tax which was put upon vans. While, no doubt, he had received remonstrances from the owners of heavy vans on the one hand, he had, on the other hand, received strong expressions of approval on the ground that these heavy conveyances, which caused immense expense in repairing the roads, should contribute to their repair. As attention had been drawn to the remonstrances in the Press, he wished to point out that when any particular interest was hit it was certain that they would write to the newspapers, while the vast number of those who would benefit by the remission of rates were silent; and in that way sometimes a false public opinion was created. With reference to the point most properly brought to his attention by the hon. Member (Mr. Pickersgill), he was making inquiries into the subject; and it was very possible that a considerably larger revenue might be derived. It was perfectly right that officials should generally be moderate in their Estimates. While he should be glad to meet any specific grievance, evidence had come to him that this tax—namely, that on heavy vans—was considered to be a fair tax;

and at present he saw no reason to modify the resolution at which the Government had arrived to propose this tax.

THE FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS—LICENCES FOR AGRICULTURAL CARTS AND WAGGONS.

MR. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether any licences will be required, either per wheel or otherwise, for waggons and carts used solely in agriculture?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir; no licences of any sort will be required for any vehicles used solely for the purposes of agriculture.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) inquired, whether the employment of carts and waggons by farmers in carrying their farm produce to market for sale or to a railway station would be considered an employment in agriculture?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; I should so understand it. If a farmer conveyed his own produce to market, or to a railway station, that would be employment on the work of the farm. On the other hand, if he let out his carts, and did haulage for other people, that would clearly not come under the exemption, and he would be liable.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked, whether farmers' carts which were used for carrying coal from railway stations would be liable to be taxed?

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member is perfectly right in putting this Question. Where a farmer uses his cart for the conveyance of coal from railway stations for other persons, then I consider that he ought to pay the tax; but if he uses it, say, to take his wheat to a railway station, and to bring back coal for his own use, then I do not consider that he ought to pay the tax. That is the general spirit in which the Act will be administered. It is very difficult to say beforehand how particular cases will be dealt with; but, doubtless, some latitude will be allowed in the administration of the statute.

SCOTLAND—LOCAL TAXATION— ALLOCATION OF £240,000.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer,

When the scheme for the distribution of the sum of £240,000, to be allocated to Scotland in aid of local taxation during the present year, will be laid before Parliament; and, whether, inasmuch as the grant for main roads, which is to be a first charge on that sum, is almost exclusively a grant in favour of the county ratepayer, he will take care that the interests of the ratepayers of the towns are duly regarded in the general scheme?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, with regard to the first part of the Question, he would give the hon. Member the earliest Notice possible as to when the proposal would be laid before Parliament. As to the second point, he was in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland; and it would be the earnest desire of both of them to do justice as between the ratepayers in the country and the ratepayers in the towns.

Mr. BUCHANAN wished to know, whether they would have the information as to how the sum was to be allocated in Scotland before the Local Government Bill for England passed through the House?

Mr. R. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.) asked, whether there was any reason why the financial arrangement affecting Scotland should not be laid before the House now?

Mr. GOSCHEN said, there was no Vote to be taken before the information with regard to allocation to Scotland and Ireland was laid before the House. What he had said, or what he intended to say, was that a Vote would have to be taken before the sum could be allocated; but not before the Government could announce their intentions to the House. He would communicate again with the Secretary for Scotland, and he was in communication with the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and he would endeavour to give the earliest information with regard to the proposals which he should make. He could only repeat that the Government were under somewhat high pressure with regard to the preparation of the various schemes; and he was anxious that there should be every deliberation as to the best mode of distributing, both in Ireland and Scotland, those sums that would be allocated to local purposes. No

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further delay would take place than was absolutely necessary.

CRIMINAL LAW—7 & 8 GEO. IV. CAP. 28 —REPEAL OF THE "WHIPPING PROVISIONS."

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Government will introduce their promised Bill to repeal the "whipping" provisions of the 7 & 8 Geo. IV. c. 28; and, whether it has been decided to include the repeal of the "whipping" provisions of the Vagrant Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he hoped to be able this Session to repeal the provision referred to by the hon. Gentleman, either by the Statute Law Revision Bill or by a separate measure. He would consider the suggestion as to repealing the "Whipping Clauses" of the Vagrant Act.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) (for Mr. KELLY) (Camberwell, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, when giving Notice of his intention to move an Address to Her Majesty for the appointment of an additional Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, he has had in mind the provisions of Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, now in this House, and which has already passed through the House of Lords, the language of which clause is as follows:—

"On an Address from both Houses of Parliament representing that, regard being had to the duties imposed by this Act on the *ex officio* Commissioner, the state of business in the High Court in England requires the appointment of an additional Judge of that Court," &c.;

and, whether the proposed appointment of a further Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice would be in addition to or substitution for the appointment provided for under such Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The appointment of an additional Chancery Judge is rendered necessary by the state of business in that Division of the High Court of Justice. The powers given by

Clause 6 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill will enable the Government to appoint a Judge; but no such proposal will be made to the House unless the then state of business in the High Court renders it absolutely necessary that such an addition shall be made.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

GOVERNMENT YARDS AND FACTORIES.

RESOLUTION.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham), in rising to move as an Amendment—

"That in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government Yards and Factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"

said, that it was unnecessary to offer any apology to the House for asking it to postpone the consideration of the Estimates for a short time in order to turn its attention, if only for an hour or so, to a subject which was quite as interesting and quite as important, both from an economic point of view, as the saving or the squandering of the nation's taxes. The condition of the labour market and of the sources of employment raised questions which not only puzzled philosophers and statisticians, but constituted for the practical politician the one question of supreme importance at the present time. The one subject which seemed to escape the sweep of our statesmen's telescope was the small Island in which we lived and had our being. He might be paradoxical and parochial in his ideas, but he could not help thinking that the number and the prospects of our unemployed artisans at home formed a subject quite as worthy of consideration as the condition of Egypt, the Canadian Fishery Question, the Indian liquor question, or the remuneration of that interesting person, the Royal rat-catcher. What was the present condition of the labour market? It was generally computed that there

were at the present time some 7,000,000 of adult male workers in the Three Kingdoms. According to the speech delivered by the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. Abrahams) last December, at the annual Congress of the Trades Union at Swansea, there were at the present time 900,000 workmen out of employment, and according to the same authority, the 6,000,000 workmen were working on an average 9 hours a-day. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that if that average of 9 hours a-day were reduced to 8 hours, the immediate effect would be to absorb 750,000 out of the 900,000 unemployed. He imagined, however, although, of course, he spoke under correction, that out of the 7,000,000 workmen there were 5,500,000 in employment and 1,500,000 out of employment, and he put the average daily normal working hours at 10 instead of 9, or 60 hours a-week. The average overtime worked by each man was 12 hours a week, which was a little less than the average overtime at the Woolwich and Enfield Factories in 1885. As the normal hours of labour were 60 per week, and the average amount of overtime 12 hours per man, seeing that 12 was the fifth of 60, it followed that if the average of 12 hours overtime were distributed it would absorb 1,100,000 out of the 1,500,000 of unemployed artisans. Now, the Government of this country was a very large, if not the largest, employer of labour. It employed, or did until recently, at Woolwich and Enfield alone, more than 10,000 men, and at the five great Dockyards it employed 21,000. It was, therefore, necessary to look with special solicitude to see what attitude the Government took up on the subject of overtime. He should also be glad to learn from some Member of the Government what view they took of the respective merits of overtime and night shifts. He thought it was necessary that there should be an authoritative declaration on the subject in order that the country might know the mind of the Government, especially as there was reason to believe that a sensible and wholesome alteration had been made recently. What the public were able to learn from Parliament Returns was that in the year 1885-6—he apologized for the age of the figures he was compelled to give, but it would have taken too long to bring the figures

up to a more recent date—in the year 1885-6, out of a total of 10,254 men employed at the Government establishments at Woolwich and Enfield, 7,760 worked, on an average, 12½ hours per week overtime for 37 weeks out of the 52. The total number of hours overtime worked at Enfield and Woolwich in that year was 4,832,950, which, if distributed among fresh men, would have given employ to 1,549 hands for 52 weeks at 60 hours a-week. Thus every five men working overtime kept out a sixth. It was, however, said that the sixth man was not there to accept employment, and, therefore, that the Government must work overtime because the necessary labour was not available. He knew it was a prevalent belief that all those called the unemployed were unskilled labourers, and some persons went so far as to say that the unemployed were for the most part thieves and roughs. Heaven knew what the unskilled artisans might come to if they were left no alternative but crime and the workhouse. Unfortunately it had been shown that up to the present time a large percentage of the most skilled workmen had for some time past been living on the unemployed benefit fund of the Trades Unions. He wished to prove that the sixth man was there, and to prove, also, from statistical tables and from the Trades Unions returns, published in the form of a Blue-Book, that highly skilled artisans of the very same description as those who had been working overtime in the Government Dockyards and factories were walking about the streets and factories waiting for employment and living on the unemployed benefit funds of the Trades Unions. What was the description of men who had been working overtime at Woolwich and Enfield? They were engine fitters, engineers, smiths, boiler makers, ironship-builders, moulders, carpenters, joiners, wheelwrights, masons, brickmakers and others. If hon. Members would turn to the tables of the Trades Union Societies they would find that in the year 1886 there were in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers 7·4 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, and necessitating an expenditure on the part of that Society of £1 12s. 5½d. per member; of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Engineers 7·8

per cent of its members were receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, necessitating an expenditure of £1 12s. 7d. per member; the Steam-Engine Makers' Society had 5·8 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, necessitating an expenditure of £1 2s. 11d. per member; the Friendly Society of Iron Founders had no less than 13·9 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the united benefit fund, involving an expenditure of £2 14s. 7d. per member; the United Society of Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders had 22·2 of its members receiving assistance from the unemployed benefit fund, entailing an expenditure of £1 7s. 11d. per member; the United Kingdom Pattern Makers Association had 9·6 per cent of its members receiving assistance from the united benefit fund; and the Associated Blacksmiths' Society had 14·4 per cent receiving in a similar way. He maintained that these tables were a splendid record of the fight which the Trades Unions of the country had been making with distress and the want of employment; but the Trades Unions could not go on indefinitely standing this strain upon their resources. There was another feature in regard to overtime work, which he desired to bring under the notice of the House—namely, its costliness and its extravagance. By paying wages of time and a half or time and a quarter to a tired man, they were paying an appreciated price for a depreciated article. He put the produce value of overtime work at a quarter below that of ordinary time; but they paid a quarter more for it. In this way for 4,800,000 hours of overtime work, which was in round numbers the amount of overtime work done in Woolwich and Enfield in 1885, the men claimed and were paid wages for 6,000,000 hours at time and a quarter, or 7,200,000 hours at time and a half. But the produce value was worth a quarter less than ordinary time; so that for 3,600,000 hours' work they paid 6,000,000 hours' wages. This feature of overtime work was perfectly familiar to all large employers of labour, and he was not surprised to find that the Government officials one and all united in condemning the wastefulness and extravagance of overtime. This was shown by the

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evidence given before Lord Morley's Committee on the Manufacturing Departments of the Army, which reported last year. Among the witnesses examined was Colonel Barlow, the Superintendent of the Royal Laboratory at Woolwich, who said, in answer to question 3,302—

"I think it advisable to spread your work over as large a number of men as you can. In the case of overtime you give the men a good deal of extra pay for the time being, and then it stops; and, so far as the men themselves are concerned, that is a positive disadvantage. I think as a Government work we are right to employ a greater number of men instead of employing a smaller number and giving them a tremendous amount of work. For instance, I found them working up to 10 o'clock at night, and as soon as I could, I introduced night shifts and extended the work over a greater number."

General Maitland, the Superintendent of the Gun Factory objected to overtime on the ground that it was extravagant and wasteful; as also did Mr. Hurst, Accountant and Auditor to the Manufacturing Departments, on the score of expense. The Committee on the Administration of the Dockyards reported in the previous year. Before that Committee, in 1886, Admiral Herbert, Admiral Superintendent at Portsmouth Dockyard, in answer to question 1,615, condemned "extra time" as very expensive, and said—

"That it was impossible for men to work those long hours and give us any return proportionate for our money."

Mr. John Huddy and Mr. Robert Barnaby joined in the same view. That was a formidable list of witnesses, and he would like to know, and the public were interested in knowing, whether the public had really parted for ever with a system of work which was so unjust to those who had no work at all, which was so costly to the ratepayers, and which was so injurious to the moral and physical welfare of this generation. He would like to know whether it was the fact that overtime had been forbidden at Woolwich and Enfield. He should like to know further, whether that prohibition extended to all Government Departments of labour, and whether it was a temporary suspension or a permanent regulation. The House knew that six weeks overtime had already been worked at Enfield this year. He should like to know what was the nature of the work

done by overtime, and if the work could not have been done by night shifts. He would further like to know if in the future the Government were going to substitute working by night shifts for a system of working by overtime. He asked these questions in no spirit of hostility to the Government. He simply asked for information which he thought would be interesting to those who were specially concerned with this branch of the labour question. The question of overtime in Government yards, shops, and factories, and its relation to the labour market, was merely the fringe of that very much larger question which, to an over-populated country, was the one question of supreme moment and surpassing interest—namely, the general distribution of wages and employment throughout the country. It seemed to him to be a question of whether one man was to work overtime and another man to work no time, of whether two men were to work for eight hours or one man for 16 hours. It seemed to him to be a question whether the labourer Dives would allow the labourer Lazarus to pick up the crumbs which fell from his table, or whether he would insist on sweeping them up for his own benefit. We know that any universal application of an Eight Hours' Bill would be impossible in a society like ours, and, if possible, it would be undesirable. It would be impossible, because, before contemplating the adoption of an Eight Hours' Bill, they must first of all get foreign workmen in other countries to reduce their hours of labour, or else they must shut them out of this country by the strictest protection. Any advocate of an Eight Hours' Bill who did not realize that was playing a game at blind man's buff. An Eight Hours' Bill would be impossible in the second place, because intellectual labour and the retail work of redistribution in shops differed essentially from manual labour, and could not be controlled by the same measures. He repeated, therefore, that it was impossible to put a whole society into the Procrustean bed of an Eight Hour Bill. But the working classes themselves had the same power over their hours of labour as they had over the wages they received. They could reduce their hours by the same lever by which they raised their wages; it was by the working classes themselves that

the hours of labour must be shortened in this country. It was by combination, by the pressure of public opinion, by voluntary association, rather than by any Eight Hours' Bill that the excessive hours of labour in this country must be shortened. It had already been done in South London by a voluntary closing movement, under the auspices of his hon. Friend the Member for Dulwich (Mr. Maple). They were told that working men who got overtime liked that overtime, and, like all monopolists, refused to share it with their unemployed brethren. He very much doubted that, because, in the first place, working men were very just to one another, and because, in the second place, the unemployed were a terrible tax on the employed, a far greater tax upon the working classes than to any other class. Not only were they a burden on the rates of the parish and the funds of the Union, but upon the earnings of the working men from whom the unemployed were always begging or borrowing. The truth was, that a country with an overstocked labour market like ours must be prepared to do one of two things—either to secure by some means or another a more equal distribution of wages and employment, or be prepared to deal with a very large increase of the pauper and criminal classes. We must face this, because it faced us. Those who would not face facts were sure to be made to feel them. It was the same problem which 40 or 50 years ago stung the sardonic humour of Carlisle into prophecies—then described as the mutterings of dyspepsia—now being realized day by day. It was the same problem which moved the fierce indignation of Kingsley, and which lent to the pages of Disraeli's *Sybil* their most pathetic interest. The same problem was now again before us, but under conditions how changed. There was now a larger population, no Corn Laws to abolish, no landed aristocracy at whose doors they could lay the burden of their sufferings. The condition of the landed classes in this country was pitiable in the extreme, was almost such as might "draw iron tears down Pluto's cheek." That condition had been reached while we had been enjoying the unrestricted importation of every article under the sun, human beings included. For 40 years the gospel of every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost,

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had been preached and practised in this country with amazing success. It had produced cheap money and the sweating system; a million of unemployed, and money so cheap that the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down and reduced the interest on the National Debt. What a commentary on the gospel of gain from ruin! A period of unexampled cheapness of money, said the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and a population of something like 5,000,000 of men, women, and children who could get no work or wages, or who were forced to work under conditions which had lately been revealed, and which made a very ugly stain indeed on the gorgeous garment of our modern civilization. Was it not time, then, to take stock of our industrial condition, and were they not entitled to look to the Government for guidance and direction on that labour question, for on no question more than that did the public of this country require more guidance and direction, because economic distress was always more dangerous and more difficult to deal with than political discontent. He expected to receive a sympathetic, and a satisfactory answer from the Government; and he was certain that the formal repudiation of the principle of overtime by the Government would have a sensible and salutary effect in diminishing excessive hours of labour throughout the country, and would thus be a first step towards that more equal distribution of profits, wages, and work which alone could save an over-populated country from industrial anarchy and social ruin. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the present condition of the labour market, it is expedient, with a view to giving employment to a greater number of workmen, to discontinue the practice of working overtime in Government yards and factories, so far as may be done without injury to the Public Service,"—(*Mr. Baumann*),

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Peckham had brought forward a very interesting subject in moving his Resolution; but he was afraid that, speaking on behalf of the Government, he could not accept the assumptions contained in that Resolution. Those assumptions were two in number. His hon. Friend assumed, first, that there was a practice of working overtime in the Government Dockyards and manufactories; and, next, that if that practice were discontinued a greater number of persons would be employed in those establishments. He was afraid that his hon. Friend and he approached that subject from somewhat different points of view. His hon. Friend approached it from the point of view of the condition of the labour market and the dearth of employment which existed in many places. Everybody, of course, had great sympathy with the unemployed workmen, and must feel that it was exceedingly desirable that the trade of the country should be in such a state as to give full employment to all our working population. The Government, therefore, had great sympathy with his hon. Friend when he expressed the earnest desire that work might in some way or other be found for the unemployed. But they had to approach matters affecting the Government manufacturing establishments from a somewhat different point of view from that of his hon. Friend. They had to conduct the Government yards and factories in the manner which would secure the greatest efficiency and the greatest economy. Those were the rules by which alone they must be guided; and, looking at the question from that point of view, the Government absolutely condemned systematic overtime. They thought that systematic overtime was costly, both as regarded the money that was expended and as regarded the quality of the work that was produced. He might point out that they had not in the Departments either under the First Lord of the Admiralty or under the Secretary of State for War any systematic overtime at all. His hon. Friend had quoted certain Returns which went as far back as 1885-6, and complained that there was no material to his hand of later date; but if he had gone to the Library he would have

found there a continuation of the Return that was moved for by the hon. Member for East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) last year, and which had since been presented, showing the amount of overtime at Enfield and Woolwich in 1886-7. From that Return it would be seen that, although in 1885-6, during a time of great pressure, there was a considerable amount of overtime at those manufacturing establishments, yet since that date the amount of overtime had been enormously reduced, and at present there was no systematic overtime at all. When his right hon. Friend the present First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was at the War Office he looked into that matter very carefully, and issued an order that the practice of overtime must be discontinued except in cases of urgency at the manufacturing establishments of the War Office; and since that period the practice had been discontinued, and at present systematic overtime did not exist there. As to the Dockyards, he could not, of course, speak with anything like the same authority; but he had obtained from his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) the information that the working of overtime in the Dockyards and Factories of that Department was entirely discontinued so far as could be done without injury to the Public Service, and was only resorted to in cases of great urgency or emergency, where it was necessary to advance some special parts of the work, and that it had been arranged to work night-shifts wherever practicable. So that as regarded the Dockyards systematic overtime was altogether discontinued. It was, of course, perfectly clear that occasional overtime must sometimes take place, as, for instance, for the repair of machinery or the preparation for night-shifts, or to advance some special part of the work for which special skilled labour was required. His hon. Friend had referred to overtime being worked at Enfield Factory at a very recent period. It was true that overtime was sanctioned for a few weeks at Enfield in order to advance special parts of the new rifle, which required special skill, and which they wished to advance as quickly as possible. It was their desire to put the new rifle into the hands of the troops for manual drill with the least possible delay, and

that could only be attained by employing certain special men overtime for a short period. If he, as Secretary of State for War, had interfered and not allowed that limited amount of overtime the only effect would have been to delay the time at which the new rifle was put into the hands of the troops, and it would not have been possible to employ one single additional man at Enfield. Therefore, as regarded the Government establishments they had discontinued systematic overtime, and they did not resort to overtime except in cases of urgency. They could give his hon. Friend no further assurance than that. In a case of urgency they must claim the right to employ the men in the Dockyards and Government manufacturing establishments for overtime if the interests of the Public Service required it. But, as his hon. Friend said his main object was to obtain a declaration from the Government in regard to overtime, his hon. Friend would admit that he had now given as full and complete an assurance as to their policy and practice as could be fairly asked from them; and therefore he supposed that his hon. Friend would not think it necessary to put the House to the trouble of a Division on his Resolution.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £7,900, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department Buildings.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) said, he rose for the purpose, not of finding fault with what was in the Estimate, but of finding fault with what was not in it. The condition of the building of the Normal School of Science, to which he would like to draw the attention of the Committee, was really almost disgraceful. The accommodation which they had at present in this school, the only Government school in the country for training science teachers, would be a disgrace to a third-rate German town. He happened only that day to visit the school, and had

judged for himself what the accommodation was. To take one department only—namely, that of the experimental science of physics under the able direction of Professor Rücker. It appeared that so large a number of students at the present moment attended that particular department, that the buildings on the east side of Exhibition Road were entirely insufficient for their accommodation, and that a temporary building on the west side, which was put up for the International Exhibition, had been rented from the Commissioners of 1851, and was used as a physical laboratory. Not only was that building totally inadequate, but even that was to be taken away from the Science School. He was informed that the authorities of the Imperial Institute had given notice that they would require the land upon which the building was erected in a very short time for a road which they purposed making, or were in the act of making, between Queen's Gate and Exhibition Road. The consequence of this would be that the whole of the students who now worked in this building would be thrown, as it were, out of employment, and that our only Government Normal School of Science would actually have to reject the very large number of students who were now going there. He would put it to the First Commissioner of Works whether this was a desirable condition of things, and whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention should not be directed to the very important question of providing accommodation of a really efficient character for this great national institution? Even from an economic point of view this matter required, he thought, the attention of Her Majesty's Government, for should these students be turned away from the doors of the Normal School, the fees which they paid, amounting now to no less than £3,500 a-year, would no longer be paid into the Exchequer, and the Government would suffer a corresponding loss. He trusted, therefore, that this first point to which he begged to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works would be carefully considered by him. But there was a still wider question to which he wished to refer, and that was the housing of the National Science Collections. The Committee were, perhaps, not aware that we

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possessed now in South Kensington one of the most complete collections of scientific instruments and apparatus in Europe, and that it was only housed in temporary buildings—in a portion of the building once occupied by the International Exhibition. For this housing the Government now paid £2,000 a-year. Some time ago, this matter having attracted the attention of the Government, a Departmental Committee was appointed considering, not so much whether this collection should continue or should be housed, but having the collection, and valuing it, how it should be housed. The Committee consisted of Sir Frederick Bramwell, Lord Lingen, Mr. Mitford, and Colonel Donnelly, and they went into the whole question most fully. Evidence was obtained from all the leading men of science in the country as to the necessity and importance of this collection, and the Report of the Committee was so nearly unanimous that three of these gentlemen—namely, Sir Frederick Bramwell, Lord Lingen, and Colonel Donnelly, reported most favourably of the necessity of having proper buildings erected for the housing of the collection. Mr. Mitford reported separately, not so much because he did not agree with the Report of his Colleagues, as because he failed to appreciate so much as they seemed to do the value of this scientific collection. About that matter, however, there could be no doubt at all. The question of the cost of the erection of suitable buildings was most carefully gone into, and it was shown that, inasmuch as a very large rent had to be paid towards the housing of the present collection, and considering the sale of other land and buildings belonging to Government which would no longer be needed, a sum of something like £32,000 would be sufficient to pay for what was required. Under these circumstances, he thought there ought to be no difficulty in inducing the Government to look into the matter, and to take steps to put the National Science Collection on a footing worthy of the nation. A great deal had been talked about our failing industries, and we had heard much about protecting those industries; but he would venture to say that the one mode which all were agreed would lead to the protection of our industries was the development of the scientific education of the people. As he had said before, the present con-

dition of things was a disgrace to the nation. When they heard of a small country like Switzerland spending £70,000 or £80,000 in erecting a single building, he thought it was high time that we should turn round and put our house in order, so far as concerned the proper accommodation in the National Science Schools and the housing of this scientific collection. He trusted that the Board of Works and Her Majesty's Government would give their best attention to this matter, which was one of real national importance.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said he should like to say a word or two on this subject. He must candidly say that he agreed with the hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) that something ought to be done to complete the Museum at South Kensington. When they looked into the Estimate they found that on new works, alterations, and additions to the South Kensington Museum only £100 was to be spent, and those of them who believed in the importance of the National Science and Art Collection at South Kensington must say that they ought to look forward to the building in which the collection was exhibited being completed at once. Another part of the Estimate showed that they were paying at the present time no less than £4,500 for the rent of premises on the opposite side of the road to the Museum. Under the new state of affairs as to the future rate of Consols, that represented a sum of something like £200,000. Well, he (Mr. Bartley) thought the time had come when they should make the South Kensington Museum complete, and should finish the buildings which had been designed for so many years, and do away with the present old and perfectly unsuitable premises on the other side of the road which they were now renting. It was true he had taken an active part in the objection raised to the system of circulating objects of art throughout the country, and he thought the reason why money was not given freely to complete these Museum buildings was because many persons thought that South Kensington spent too much money in keeping Art treasures, duplicates, and reproductions to itself, and did not circulate them as much as they should amongst other parts of the country. But, be that as it might, he agreed that it was a disgrace to the

country that they should not by this time have completed these Museum buildings. It was true that a good deal of money had been spent on them; but it was also true, as the hon. Member opposite had pointed out, that smaller countries than our own spent greater sums than we did on such purposes. He thought the time had arrived when they should complete the buildings in South Kensington and put its working upon a broader basis. If this were decided upon he thought the House would be very willing to spend the necessary amount. He must say he did not look with any great hope to the two Front Benches doing this. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), if he got up to speak on this subject, would advocate increased expenditure for this purpose; but, as it was pointed out last night, when the right hon. Gentleman was on the Ministerial side of the House, he did not take any steps to bring about such a consummation. The only way in which a satisfactory result in regard to this matter could be arrived at, and the Museum buildings completed, was for both sides of the House to combine in forcing the Front Bench into action. If this magnificent Museum were complete he believed it would do more than any other measure which could be adopted to promote trade and industry. Nothing would do more good than to put this Exhibition in a better position, and extend its operations by loans of specimens through the small as well as the large provincial towns of the country.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he hoped the Committee would allow him to add a few words to what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen who had taken part in the debate so far. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) occupied, as they knew, a position of authority in connection with Owen's College, Manchester, and he (Mr. F. S. Powell) had the honour of being a member of the Governing Body of the Yorkshire College at Leeds; and he must say that when they took into account the work that was being done by those two provincial institutions, the position of South Kensington in regard to the country generally was discreditable to the Government. He thought the time had come when those who had seats in the House, as the Representa-

tives of the industrial classes in the country, ought to entreat the Government, not indeed to be lavish, but to be just and generous in their dealings with this institution. They had had occasion in the course of last year to regret the contraction of the grant to the British Museum; and while they viewed that contraction with great regret, he was sure they did not regard with any more satisfaction the unfair and unjust economy with regard to the scientific department, so to say, of our popular institutions in London. They had pressed on the Government by deputations and by various means the necessity of giving wider and larger and more perfect technical instruction throughout the country; but when they dealt with that which was the centre, that which was the chief, that which was the origin, and at the same time the controlling power in London, they found a want of largeness of view, and had to lament a most deplorable and false economy on the part of the Executive. He (Mr. F. S. Powell) had had an opportunity of visiting the collection at South Kensington in the course of the last few weeks, and he believed that no one could visit that Museum without feeling great regret that such a building should be allowed to remain in an incomplete state. Some portions of the building, as they know, had been carried out in accordance with the designs of those who laid out the general scheme; but other parts were entirely unbuilt, and the remainder was in a miserably decaying condition, which was a sarcasm and a satire upon the whole conception. It was the wish of some Members of the House of Commons at all times to press economy upon the Government. It fell to his lot some times to join in this cry; but he did hope that if they were economical when economy was called for, they would also be liberal when necessity demanded liberality. It seemed to him to be really a mockery that they should be on all occasions entreating the Government to aid Municipalities in the different districts in the giving of technical instruction; and that then, when they came to London itself and to the Central Government, they should find matters worked down to what was really a miserable starvation point. There was one point of detail to which he should like to call the attention of the Government, and to ask them to answer a question upon,

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and that was the item of insurance. He saw that the sum for insurance had been reduced from the sum of £400 to £100. He held there was no more false economy than restricting the amount of insurance, and he trusted they would have an assurance from the Government, in the course of this discussion, that the reduction of the amount from £400 to £100 had not arisen from any reduction in the total amount for which the Museum was insured. He held that no more false economy could be committed than to risk the loss without compensation of such valuable objects as those which were continued in the Museum for the mere sake of saving the sum of £300. He (Mr. F. S. Powell) was sorry for having trespassed so long on the time of the Committee; but he had felt bound to take part in the discussion, having, as he had, the subject so closely at heart.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I wish to say, in the first place, that so far as I am personally concerned, and I am sure I may speak for every Member of Her Majesty's Government, that we most entirely sympathize with the great interest which the hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) has expressed—and certainly no one has a greater right to speak on this subject than he has—in the welfare and prosperity and highest development of the Science and Art Department of South Kensington; and whatever part may be taken—whatever, comparatively speaking, humble part may be taken by the Office I have the honour to represent in this controversy, so I can assure the hon. Member and the Committee that it is in a spirit of most hearty goodwill to all the interests for which the hon. Member has so well pleaded this evening. But then the Committee must understand that this question is one of very considerable difficulty. It has been felt to be a question of difficulty not only by the present Government, but also by the late Government, and the various proposals that have been made from time to time have not been given effect to, because all the interests concerned in this question have unfortunately not been able so far to come to a common understanding on the subject. Now, of course, it is quite true that it is better that a little time

should be occupied in arriving at a thoroughly satisfactory plan than that, by a hasty decision, a wrong direction should be given to the ultimate development of this important institution; but, on the other hand, I must admit that there has been very great delay indeed on the part of successive Governments in dealing with this question—a delay which I myself deplore, and which I should be very glad to see terminated. But now let me explain to the Committee that it is not quite as plain sailing to settle this question as one might suppose if he had only heard one side of the matter. The authorities representing the Science and Art Department at South Kensington have very wide views as to how this subject should be dealt with. They naturally wished that in whatever buildings are undertaken the largest provision should be made, not only for the present needs, but also for the possible development of this great institution. On the other hand, the Treasury has to consider what they might fairly propose in the way of expense in the interests of this particular Department. I am afraid that it is a kind of triangular duel which has been going on for some time. The Office of Works being appealed to by the Treasury are, of course, bound to advise them from the practical point of view of the builder as to what they really think can fairly be asked in the way of increased buildings, and as to what they thought unnecessary and visionary demands. I ought to say at once that I admit that there is a considerable and a pressing want of immediate relief—and when I say immediate relief, I mean as soon as it can possibly be afforded—for the congestion that at present exists at South Kensington as regards the operations of the Science and Art Department. I do not think it would be of any use now for me to go over the early history of this controversy. I have no intention of doing so. I wish rather to submit to the Committee the proposals which have been made by me since I have been at the Office of Works. What we proposed to the Government was that there was a very large question which would have sooner or later to be decided, and the sooner it was decided the better; but that that matter was rather a question for the future, and one

which, comparatively speaking, could afford to wait for its decision—namely, in what shape and form the Science and Art Department should find housing in South Kensington when the whole of the ground which is naturally the best for its accommodation—I mean that part which lies to the east of Exhibition Road—should come to be occupied by buildings. There have been various plans proposed. There were plans proposed by General Scott, and there have since been plans proposed by the Surveyor and Architect under the Office of Works. These plans, I believe, have each considerable merit; but I am not at all sure that when we put our hand to the plough and really undertake to make this building, it would not be, perhaps, advisable—I only throw it out as my own opinion—to invite the very best architectural skill to deal with this very important matter—important not only in the interests of the Department of Science and Art, but also important because it will permanently affect a very prominent site in a very beautiful part of London; and I think everybody will feel that, when that ground is covered, it should be covered by a building which should not only meet the wants of the Science and Art Department, but will be in itself an admirable architectural feature. That is all I want to say about the ultimate solution of this question; but it is agreed on all hands that any such plan, if it were undertaken, would require at least four years, and possibly a longer time to give effect to it. Well, but the want is pressing, and we have made suggestions which, I am afraid, have not been favourably considered by the Science and Art Department. I will tell the Committee what those suggestions were. There are at present abutting on the eastern side of the Exhibition Road four large and handsome residences, which are occupied by officers connected with the Science and Art Department. Now, one of the suggestions was that two or three—at all events, two—of these residences should, at any rate for a time, be taken from those who inhabit them at present, accommodation being found for those officers elsewhere. There would be no difficulty whatever in finding accommodation for them in the immediate vicinity of the establishment at South Kensington, and in these days of rapid communication by telephone and

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otherwise we do not suppose that any inconvenience would accrue from, say, two of these officers being located in the immediate neighbourhood and having to go a short way before reaching the Exhibition. The space which would be in this way obtained could, we are satisfied, be easily adapted for meeting the immediate wants of the Science and Art Department. We made, also, a further proposal. There are at present in these buildings in South Kensington a number of naval specimens, and various objects exhibited there in connection with naval architecture; and we have proposed that that part of the collection at South Kensington should be removed, at all events for a time, say to Greenwich, where we believe that accommodation could be found for it, the space so saved being given to the Science and Art Department. I may say that these proposals are the best we can think of to meet the want which we fully admit to exist, and which we are most anxious to see properly dealt with. I am afraid, however, that when the Treasury submitted these proposals to the Science and Art Department they were not favourably received; and so, unfortunately, the triangular duel appears still to be going on. I can only add that I regret this very much, and that whenever the Science and Art Department can propose terms which will be satisfactory to the Treasury—and, of course, the Treasury being the Department which has to find the money for anything which is done, it must first be satisfied on the subject before anything can be undertaken—then I assure the Committee that the Office of Works will be perfectly ready and most glad and prompt in giving whatever assistance they can to settle this question, which, as I explained when I commenced these few observations, is an object which I feel, as strongly as any Member of the Committee, is one deserving to be dealt with as soon as it conveniently can.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): The concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down appear to me to sum up the whole question. The right hon. Gentleman said that when the Science and Art Department could make proposals which would be satisfactory to the Board of Works and the Treasury, then it was to be hoped the question would be solved.

Now, Sir, it does not rest with the Science and Art Department. They have done everything, I believe, that lies in the power of the Department to do to bring about an accommodation both with the Board of Works and the Treasury, and the whole matter has been investigated in the fullest, most careful, and most impartial manner, and by the most impartial investigators. The hon. Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe) did not use too strong language when he said that the condition of the Science and Art Department at South Kensington was a disgrace to the country. It really is a public scandal, and I am quite sure that if the public had any idea of the condition of things, they would not tolerate it for a day longer. Now let me just state to the House how the matter stands. In the first place, the office accommodation and the examination rooms are altogether inadequate for the services which have to be performed. There are servants there who are working in passages, corridors, and cellars—I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council knows all about it—and are crowded up in unhealthy rooms in conditions under which no public or private servant ought to be asked to work. It is in the last degree disgraceful that this state of things should be continued. There are something like £80,000 worth of Art objects which have been examined, or are to be examined, in the old building known as one of the old "Brompton Boilers," and when we remember the way in which the work is done it can hardly be imagined that it can be allowed to continue. The improvement of the state of the Science School is a matter of immediate and pressing necessity. That school has completely overflowed its limits, and a part of the physical laboratory has gone to the French annexe of the Museum on the opposite side of the road. That annexe is required either next year or the present year—I believe during this year—for the Imperial Institute, and the Science and Art School will have to "clear out." There will be 60 students displaced, and there will be a loss of fees alone of over £3,000 a-year. But, more than that, the new students coming up from the country will have no accommodation, and this is, as has been pointed out, our training school for

Science teachers. We talk about technical education in this House and on public platforms, we plead for it, and are all in favour of it—that is to say, we are in favour of talking about it—but no one seems to be in favour of spending money on it, and the result is that we are about to diminish our supply of Science teachers in consequence of lack of room in this Department. Then I go to the housing of the Science Collection. We have a Science Collection which is unexampled, which is unique, and which, taken with our Patent Museum, we can safely say contains examples which no Museum of the kind in the world contains. Our Patent Museum possesses Arkwright's great loom, Stephenson's first steam engine, and many other similar great inventions. In fact, from an historical as well as an industrial point of view, there is nothing to compare with the contents of this Museum anywhere else in the world. But these objects of interest cannot at present be seen or examined. Nothing could be more wretched than the position in which they are placed at the present moment. No one who has not seen the manner in which they are exhibited can believe how bad it is. They require, in order to be properly understood and appreciated, that proper accommodation should be given to them. It may be said, however, that these things will not suffer by delay; but that cannot be said in connection with the Science School. That is suffering by delay, and if when the right hon. Gentleman opposite passes the Technical Education Bill, as we sincerely hope he will, as technical education spreads in the Provinces, and as Local Authorities set up Technical Education Institutions, they will want teachers. Where are those teachers to come from? The Science School at South Kensington has provided the best teachers in the country, and that institution has done more for technical education than all the others put together, except Owen's College, in Manchester. Something ought to be said about finishing the Art Museum and Art Collection. What does the right hon. Gentleman opposite say? He says—"Well, we have our ideas about it—take over two or three private residences, pending accommodation for those who now occupy them elsewhere." I would put it to the First Lord of the

Treasury, as to the removal of the officers of the Exhibition from these residences, that you ought to have in connection with this Institution, as you have in connection with the British Museum, your officers resident on the spot. You have a collection at South Kensington the value of which amounts to millions of money. The Art specimens cannot be replaced if once lost. In case of a fire at the Museum the officers ought to be on the spot. To remove these men from the building is, I think, a great mistake; they certainly ought to be within a minute's call. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Plunket) said this is a problem which has engaged the attention of successive Governments, and that it is not so easily solved. Yes; but what is the reason that it has not been solved? It is because the Treasury, when driven into a corner, when it is short of money or wants to make a saving, says—"Oh, we will cut off Science and Art." In this country it is always a safe thing to cut down Science and Art. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) went down to Newcastle, and in his speech, which I read with great care, he said—"If you only left Science to local effort, Science would now walk alone and do without Government subsidy." As a matter of fact, he was speaking in a school which, but for Government subsidies, would have been shut up next day. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Oh, oh!] I know the school a great deal better than the noble Lord, and I tell him that nobody could be more astonished at his remarks than Dr. Rutherford.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Why, he gave me the information.

MR. MUNDELLA: But Dr. Rutherford would close his school within a month but for Government assistance. It would be impossible to continue the schools of this country unless there was a Central College for the training of teachers. But that does not arise on this particular Vote, and therefore I am afraid I have somewhat transgressed. What I specially want to do is to confirm all that has been said by my hon. Friend (Sir Henry Roscoe), and by hon. Gentlemen who spoke on the other side of the House—that there is no country in Europe that has made such wretchedly small sacrifices for the training of scien-

tific men, for the purpose of giving scientific instruction, as our own. The subsidy given in any small German State is far greater than the subsidy we give. The difference is as distinct as daylight is to darkness. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington will make that out if he turns to the Report of the Commissioners on Technical Education. It is time we should put our house in order, and put our scientific teaching upon a proper footing, if we mean to do anything in the way of technical education.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: We spend over £500,000 sterling a year.

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; but what do we spend it in? We do not spend it upon scientific teaching. That amount includes the whole of the Science grants of the country; it includes the whole of the cost of the Art teaching of the country; it includes the whole cost of management at South Kensington and the cost of the whole of the Circulation Department in the bargain. It is something less than what is spent upon a single Science teaching institution in Berlin alone. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) said we should come to an agreement about the method to be pursued. He is anxious we should take wise steps, and not be too hasty lest we should not perform our work thoroughly and satisfactorily. He pointed to the fact that a Departmental Committee was appointed to inquire into the housing of the Science and Art Collections. Lord Lingen, of the Treasury, Major General Donnelly, Sir Frederick Bramwell, and Mr. William Mitford, formed the Committee, and they all agreed, except the latter, to a Report, and that Report was signed on the 27th of July, 1885. Mr. Mitford doubted whether the public would spend the money recommended. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) would refresh his memory on the point, he would find that, so far as the Treasury of that day was concerned—and it never had a better Representative, or one who was more more careful of the expenditure than Lord Lingen—he would find that the Treasury assented through that Report to a principle which would settle the whole question.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand,

Mr. Mundella

Westminster): At that time Lord Lingen was not Secretary to the Treasury.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. Lord Lingen was Secretary to the Treasury during the whole of the time the Committee was sitting. He resigned on the 27th of July, 1885, and the Committee was appointed fully a year before that date. The whole time he sat on that Committee he was the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, and I know that since that time Lord Lingen has not changed his mind. He is of opinion that the Report ought to have been carried out. It would have been wise and economical on the part of the Government to have carried it out. However, I do not blame the Government for not having done so, but I do trust they will take some decisive action in respect of Science and Art teaching. It is a scandal if pupils who come up from the Provinces to attend Science Schools cannot be admitted to Science teaching. For the sake of the work on which we are about to enter—namely, the better technical education of our people, I trust that some better steps with respect to this teaching will be taken.

MR. PLUNKET said, that he only desired to add a few words to the observations he had already addressed to the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had criticized one of the proposals which was recently made by the Office of Works on the ground that if they excluded the officers who were at present resident in the building at South Kensington it would considerably increase the dangers besetting the Museum—especially in case of fire. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that the experience of the Office of Works was that the presence in buildings of such officers, so far from being of any advantage in the case of fire, or being any protection against fire breaking out, was to increase the danger from fire. What they found was that to protect buildings from fire by police and by night watchmen was by far the best and most practical way. In answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), the hon. Gentleman was quite right in saying that there had been a reduction in the insurance premium of South Kensington from £400 to £100. He was 'ad, however, to assure his hon. Friend had been no

reduction at all in the amount for which they were insured. They were obliged to pay a higher fee at the time the Colonial and other Exhibitions were taking place there. The Insurance Companies insisted upon higher premiums in consequence of the increased danger from fire, because of the proximity of these Exhibitions.

MR. MUNDELLA asked to be allowed to add one word by way of explanation. He did not mean to say that the officers should reside in the building, but he thought that they should reside in the grounds, some little distance from the building.

MR. PLUNKET said, that under the wing of the building were four very large and handsome houses, and it was proposed that two of them should be vacated and used to meet the pressing wants of the Institution.

MR. MUNDELLA said, there was another correction he should like to make. When he spoke of the expenditure of the Science School at Charlottenburg, the Secretary to the Treasury shook his head. He did not mean to say that that Institution cost £500,000 sterling a-year, but that the building cost £500,000, and that £140,000 more had been spent in furniture, appliances, &c.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he rose in consequence of the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). He wished to remark that he was not in the least deterred by what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman from pursuing a very close scrutiny of the expenditure of the country at the present moment on Science and Art. This was not the moment at which such a scrutiny could be made. The most convenient time for criticizing the expenditure would be on the Vote for the general expenditure upon Science and Art. He would give the right hon. Gentleman fair notice, however, that he hoped to be in a position, when the expenditure on Science and Art came up for review, to give some startling particulars of extravagance on a marvellously large scale. If those particulars were brought forward and proved to the satisfaction of the House, the hon. Member for Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe), and others

who agreed with him, would very probably have far more money to spend in the way they desired than they had at present. Constantly charges were brought by right hon. Gentlemen opposite against the Government of the country for penuriousness, short-sightedness, and other bad qualities, with respect to Science and Art, and grants for Science and Art buildings. He would like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he would cause to be prepared a Return, showing the expenditure which had been incurred in this country merely on buildings for Science and Art purposes, so that they might know exactly what had been spent, and that they might be able to meet the charges of niggardliness which were constantly brought by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite? If they could find out exactly what had been spent during the last few years upon Science and Art buildings, they would be able to compare the expenditure with that of other countries, and he thought it would be found that our expenditure on Science and Art exceeded that which had been incurred by other countries. At any rate, the Return he proposed would be very useful in view of the continued demands made on the Treasury. Those demands were very popular, and very easy to make, and it was very difficult for the Treasury to incur unpopularity by refusing them. He did not think the House had the remotest idea of the hundreds of thousands of pounds which had been sunk by the country in the payment of Professors' salaries, and in other forms of encouraging Science and Art.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he did not propose to follow the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) in his remarks, which he had listened to with considerable surprise; but he hoped they would hear from some Representative of the Government something more definite upon the question. He listened to the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) with some disappointment. No doubt, he spoke in a sympathetic spirit, but, at the same time, his remarks were not at all definite, and the suggestion he made seemed to be of the nature of a makeshift. With regard to the question of the residence

of the officers of the Museum, it was argued that, so far as the prevention of fire was concerned, police were more effective than the officers connected with the Institution could be; but, surely, when a fire had once broken out it must be of great importance to have someone on the spot who knew where the more valuable articles were stored, and what were the best steps to be taken for their protection or removal. They had heard from the hon. Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) of the crowded condition of the physical laboratory. He believed there was on the south side of the road a piece of land belonging to the Commissioners of 1851 which might be acquired. It was very desirable to secure that plot of land at once, because he understood that very probably ordinary houses would otherwise be built upon it, and the opportunity would be lost. It was quite clear that this was a matter which did not concern one Department of the Government merely; and, therefore, he hoped that before the discussion closed they would have the advantage of hearing the views of the right hon. Baronet the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) and of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson). The subject had been engaging attention for years, and it was now high time something definite was done.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) said, he sincerely hoped that in the course of the next year something would be done to improve the accommodation at South Kensington. He did not know whether the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) was aware that an annual Exhibition of drawings and prizes in connection with the Science and Art Schools of the United Kingdom took place at South Kensington in the summer months; but he (Mr. W. H. James) had attended these Exhibitions, and had experienced great difficulty in finding them. When he had found the exhibits it was exceedingly difficult to inspect them. These exhibits were prizes which were brought in from the chief centres of the United Kingdom; and it was a pity so little should be known of them. Occasionally he had seen the classes at South Kensington at work. The accommodation

Lord Randolph Churchill

was of the most wretched, unsatisfactory, and miserable kind. He was inclined to think that in respect to Science and Art education the feeling of the democracy in the constituencies generally was rather in favour of a lavish expenditure than otherwise. He sincerely hoped the Government would be able to see their way before another year came round to increase this Vote.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had listened to the debate with great interest indeed, and especially to the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella). He must draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the great complaint made against the Government was that they were penurious. They had heard different stories at different times and in different parts of the country; but he was not ashamed of their penuriousness when it was necessary in the interests of the public purse. He thought it was the duty of the Government to examine the proposals by Departments of the Government with the greatest possible care, and to be perfectly and absolutely certain the expenditure proposed was absolutely necessary in the public interest. Very much had been said this evening which seemed to indicate that other provision was necessary at South Kensington. His noble Friend the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) was amply justified in the remarks he made as to the cost of the buildings which had been erected at South Kensington within the past few years. Complaint had been made with regard to the course pursued by the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) had the Treasury to deal with in his day; and he (Mr. W. H. Smith) had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman found that the Treasury exercised a very careful supervision over the demands which were made upon South Kensington; and he had frequently, no doubt, himself been the medium of making demands upon South Kensington which were not always satisfied. The Treasury were simply doing their duty in examining most carefully the demands made from time to time. He admitted they might at the Treasury occasionally prevent the execution of works quite as quickly as they might be

demand by the public; but he wished to take note most distinctly of the fact that the Government desired only to spend money when it was necessary in the public interest, and that they were bound to offer resistance to Departments which from time to time made demands upon them from the point of view of the Department alone, and not from the point of view of the interests of the country at large. He did not wish to make any observations with reference to the particular demand for further accommodation which had been urged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe). It was a matter which demanded the consideration of the Government as a Government, and they must decide as between the Department which was wrong and that which was right, and determine which was the proper course to be taken. He undertook, on the part of the Government, that attention should be given to the question, and that a statement should be made in the House without any unreasonable delay. But he did trust that the House of Commons and the Committee of Supply would not urge the Government, night after night, to make large expenditure, and then expect them to conduct the finances of the country upon economical principles. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington asked that a Return should be given of the money spent upon Science and Art buildings. He should be exceedingly glad to give such a Return; and to make it as full and complete as possible he would suggest that it should be a Return of the cost of South Kensington from its establishment, 20 years ago, down to the present date.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he had great sympathy with Science, but very little with a great deal that was called Art; and he had also great sympathy with what the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had said with regard to economy. Therefore, his feelings with respect to this Vote were a good deal mixed. As an outsider, however, he could not refrain from saying that it did seem to him a shame that South Kensington Museum should be allowed to remain in its present unfinished state. A foreigner must be shocked and astonished that the Establishment should be allowed to remain

year after year in its present condition. While he hoped that the Treasury would exercise a wise check upon extravagance, he was bound to say we were not a nation of paupers, and that if we did keep up establishments in this country, those establishments ought to be made to present a decent front to the public. As long as he could remember South Kensington there had been a hideous spectacle of an unfinished front. He hoped the Government would either finish the Establishment or abandon it.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had promised the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington the Return he desired. To make that Return as complete as possible, he suggested that it should not only deal with the cost of buildings, but with the cost of examples from the foundation of the Museum, and with the value of the gifts made to the Museum since its establishment. He was sure that the country had no idea of the value of the Art treasures which the Museum possessed.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would endeavour to prepare the Return so as to do full justice to the views of the right hon. Gentleman as well as to those of the noble Lord. He wished to allude to one observation which fell from the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). The cost of the proposed addition would be about £300,000. That was the cost arrived at by a very elaborate process of arithmetic. The first outlay was estimated to be £233,000. The experience he had had in dealing with figures was that the outlay was absolutely certain to be exceeded, and that it was very doubtful indeed whether economy could be effected in the Estimate.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL begged the First Lord of the Treasury not to mix up the information he (Lord Randolph Churchill) required, which was valuable information, with the information the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) asked for. How could the Government give an estimate of the value of the gifts to the South Kensington Museum? What he asked for was a Return of the capital outlay on bricks and mortar in connection with South Kensington, and he hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would limit the Return to that outlay. If the right hon.

Sir George Campbell

Gentleman opposite wished to have another Return he could move for it.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) £8,940, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, he trusted that he would be in Order in referring to the question of the lighting of the British Museum at night. It was within the recollection of many hon. Members of the House that last year, in the course of a debate upon this question, the First Lord of the Treasury gave an assurance that the matter should have his full consideration. He (Colonel Duncan) could not find any mention in the Votes of the lighting of the Museum by night. It was possible that this might be owing to the uncertainty of everything in London in consequence of the introduction of the Local Government Bill; but he implored the First Lord of the Treasury and the Government not to forget this subject. There were many people in London who were only able to visit the British Museum at night. Representing, as he did, the district in which the Museum was situated, he asked the House to bear in mind the great success which had attended the opening of Museums at night elsewhere, and reminded the House that the Trustees of the British Museum had already twice recommended that action in the matter should be taken.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, his recollection of the debate of last year was that there was a general concurrence of opinion that the first step in reference to lighting should be taken at the Natural History Museum. That was a most popular Institution for the people of the Metropolis, and he believed that if it were lighted up at night it would be very largely visited.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government undertook last year to consider this question very carefully, and they obtained an estimate of the cost of the plant necessary for the lighting up of the Museum, and also of the cost of maintenance. Unfortunately, he had not got the Papers with him, as no Notice was given that this question would be raised. To the best of his recollection, however, it was estimated that the plant itself would be an

£30,000, and that the cost of maintenance would amount to £7,000 a-year. That, of course, referred to the two Museums. He believed that the cost of maintenance in the case of the Natural History Museum would be about £3,000 a-year. They had careful observations made as to the frequenters of, perhaps, the more attractive Museum at South Kensington, which was lighted up at night, and they came to the conclusion that they would hardly be justified in asking the House of Commons to incur so large an original outlay, and the annual charge which would be involved. Of course, it was for the House of Commons to say whether the hands of the Government should be forced in a matter of this kind. In addition to a question of cost, there were the dangers incurred in connection with night exhibitions in London to be considered. These Collections were of very great value; indeed, they could not be measured simply by money value, or by their cost. In many cases it would be quite impossible to replace the exhibits if, by any accident, they should be lost, and accidents were more likely to occur at night than in the day-time, when supervision was more easily exercised. The Government took counsel with those who were, next to themselves, bound to care for these Collections, and the view the Trustees held was that they would hardly be justified in asking the Government to incur the risk of lighting up the Museums at night. Under these circumstances, and having given the matter most serious consideration, with the fullest possible desire to open these Collections to the largest number of persons who, by any possibility, might visit them, the Government thought they would not be justified in putting an Estimate on the Vote for the plant required, and for the annual charge which would be involved.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could only express extreme regret at the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury. He confessed that he was astounded to learn that the cost of plant was so enormous. He should have thought that with the advance of Science the plant would not have been so tremendously expensive. Certainly the lighting of the Natural History Museum at night was not open to as much objection as the lighting of the British Museum. The exhibits were not of a

very inflammable character, and if they were destroyed they could be replaced by new ones.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said it was unfortunate that the First Lord of the Treasury had not the figures of the estimate with him. It appeared to him that the estimate as to the cost of the plant was far in excess of what it ought to be; and he was at a loss to understand why the lighting of the British Museum at night should cost £7,000 a-year.

MR. W. H. SMITH: And the Natural History Museum.

MR. BROADHURST said, that in that case there was not very much to complain of. It was an intolerable thing that a great Institution like the British Museum should be a closed building to the great mass of the people of London. The Museum was situated in the very heart of the Metropolis, within easy reach of hundreds of thousands of the working people of London; and it was now practically closed to them, except on holidays and times when they could not visit it. Most people did not cease work until 6 or 7 o'clock, and even later, and if Museums were kept open until a reasonable hour at night—say 10 o'clock—they would at once get rid of the very vexed question, on which there were strong opinions on both sides, the Sunday opening of these Institutions. He, as one strongly opposed to the opening of Museums on Sundays, felt that unless they were prepared to meet the people by throwing these Institutions open in the evening, the progress of the Sunday opening movement would be very great. As to the danger attending the lighting of the Museums at night, he could not help thinking that it was much exaggerated. The South Kensington Museum had been open at night for a number of years, and, so far as he remembered, there had never been a serious accident in consequence. He did not see why it should not be as easy to guard against accidents, or why accidents would be more likely to occur, at the British Museum and in the Natural History Museum than at South Kensington.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, that last year there was something almost amounting to a promise given by the Government that during the course of the financial year an effort would be

made to see whether that which had been so long desired by the London public could not be granted. He could not help feeling that even if the cost were as large as represented by the First Lord of the Treasury, this country ought not to hesitate to defray it, seeing that thereby an opportunity would be afforded to the working and toiling masses of the Metropolis to visit these two great Museums. He was disposed to demur to the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) as to the desirability of first of all lighting up at night the Natural History Museum, because he took it that, for an Institution whose object was to educate the people, the British Museum had a far larger claim on their attention than the Natural History Museum, setting aside for the moment the more central position of the older Institution. He strongly urged the Government, if they wished to afford an opportunity to those who had but few opportunities of seeing these great National Educational Establishments, to turn their attention seriously to the subject.

Vote agreed to.

(3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for Edinburgh University Buildings.

(4.) £17,626, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

(5.) £14,145, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he desired to ask the Minister in charge of the Vote to state what was the condition of the works in connection with Dover Harbour?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman was aware of the answer which was given yesterday by the First Lord of the Treasury to the Question put upon this subject. It would be within the recollection of the Committee that last year, when this question was raised, it was promised that the question as to further expenditure on Dover Harbour should be considered. The question hardly arose upon this Vote, because, as the hon. Member knew, Dover Harbour was rather connected with the

building of the convict prison there. However, he had no hesitation in saying that the Government having given their most serious consideration to this question, having gone through the Report of the Committee which sat on the question, and even having regard to the very large expenditure which had been already incurred upon the convict prison at Dover, had come to the conclusion that the cost of such a harbour as had been suggested would be so enormous, and that the advantage was so doubtful, that for the present, at any rate, they ought not to ask Parliament to vote any more money in respect of the Harbour at Dover.

Vote agreed to.

(6.) £9,530, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(7.) £29,180, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

(8.) £148,848, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(9.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £163,302, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.'"

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he would not agree to postpone the Vote until next Monday, when Members from Ireland could be in their places? He thought it unfair to take Votes of this kind in the absence of Members who were interested in them.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): There is no Notice of any opposition whatever against this Vote, or the next. If there had been the slightest intimation of opposition, I should not have taken them to-night; but the hon. Gentleman may be satisfied that the Report will not be taken until the time he has named.

Mr. Isaacs

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he rather demurred to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Notice of opposition to the Vote, because many questions might arise upon them with regard to which Members did not feel themselves bound to give Notice on the Paper. However, he would not press that point. With regard to the National Education Buildings, he believed it was a fact that the Estimates of previous years had been very considerably exceeded by the National Education Commissioners in connection with buildings for ordinary schools. The position of the Treasury and the Board of Works (Ireland) and the National Education Commissioners had been recently considered; certain resolutions had been adopted; certain regulations drawn up and instructions issued to the National Education Commissioners. Those instructions would limit the powers of the Commissioners to advance money for building schools under the Statute now in force. But many managers of schools had undertaken liabilities under what they considered to be a Parliamentary guarantee, and the restrictions imposed would very materially embarrass a number of gentlemen who had no reason whatsoever to suppose that the powers of the National Education Commissioners would be curtailed or suspended. That was the first point that he had to bring before the attention of the Government. His next point was connected with the Ulster Canal. Last year the Canal figured for the sum of £705. The Canal was in the hands of the Government; it was a security which they had taken, and it had constituted a heavy charge on the Exchequer for many years. The Government had tried from time to time to get rid of it; but the terms offered by the parties were so onerous and unreasonable that the House had refused to entertain them. The sum now proposed in aid of the Ulster Canal was, that year, £1,500, and there was no explanation whatever of the increase. He should be glad to receive some information from the Secretary to the Treasury on this subject. Then, on page 83, there was the sum of £5,000 on account of payment of the balance under the ~~Public~~ and Public Con 1883. He be were able to ad

a-year, at the rate of 2 per cent on the amount of capital invested, where the guarantee of the barony had been given and had been discharged by payment of a percentage of the guaranteed dividends. He asked what were the baronies which had made payment, and what were the Companies to whom payment had been made, and also the amounts paid?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, that the relation between the Treasury and the Board of Works and the National Education Commissioners in Dublin had been very correctly stated by the hon. Member as having recently undergone considerable revision. As he had explained to the House on a previous occasion, it had come to the knowledge of the Treasury that the grants approved by the National Education Commissioners had largely exceeded the provision made by Parliament, and it was necessary that some arrangement should be come to by which effective control should be exercised over those grants, and particularly with regard to the point of Supplementary Estimates. It had been his duty to put matters in such a form that there should be effective financial control, and that Supplementary Estimates should, if possible, be avoided, at the same time without disregarding what, at present at all events, he considered to be the obligation of the Government, as far as possible, to keep to the grants which had already been approved. Although he had not yet received figures which would enable him to give particular information to the Committee, yet he was having a statement prepared which would show in detail the amount of expenditure upon every school for which a grant had been sanctioned, and which was likely to come in course of payment during the current financial year and during subsequent years. He hoped that when he received those figures it would be found that the £40,000 in the Estimates for this year might be, if not entirely adequate to meet the actual requirements, at all events so nearly adequate that no Supplementary Estimates would be y, and no serious inconvenience pen in the case of schools in building. The sum of £40,000 the next three years ought, 1, to meet the full require.

ments of the case. With regard to the Ulster Canal, the cost of its maintenance had been in recent years, upon the average, about £1,100. It often happened, of course, that the expenditure was more in one year than another, according to the amount of work undertaken, and repairs necessary in particular years. With regard to the payments by baronies under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, he need not remind the Committee that Parliament had, on former occasions, passed Acts which imposed upon the Exchequer certain charges with regard to tramways made under certain Statutes if they did not earn sufficient money to meet the interest guaranteed. He did not wish to take a gloomy view of the matter; but he was afraid that some of the tramways sanctioned, like railways similarly sanctioned, would not, for some time at least, earn sufficient to pay the guaranteed interest, and that a larger sum than was asked for this year might be found necessary to meet the deficiency which might arise. The sum in the present Estimate had been arrived at on careful inquiry in each case. He had a list of the amounts likely to be earned and expended, and of the amount of charge likely to come upon the Exchequer. He was not able to furnish the names of the baronies at that moment; but he could give the hon. Member the names of the Companies. The total amount of increase was £9,000, and, therefore, in taking £5,000, the Government had made provision for very little more than half.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the Secretary to the Treasury had told the Committee little beyond the fact that, although £700 a-year had been taken for some years on account of the Canal, that amount had always been exceeded. This was one of the things which made proceedings in that House so unsatisfactory. The Estimates were really no check upon the expenditure of the Government, and had never been a check upon the Board of Works in Ireland. The Ulster Canal was a bad bargain, and, in his opinion, every sovereign spent upon it, so far as the public interest was concerned, had been practically thrown away. An Estimate was now brought forward exceeding by more than 100 per cent what had been asked for in former years.

Mr. Jackson

MR. JACKSON said, that what he had stated was that the average expenditure amounted to £1,100, although that amount was sometimes exceeded. He had explained to the Committee that last year £705 was taken, because it was not anticipated that this amount would be exceeded; but it was found that a larger expenditure would be necessary this year, and accordingly £1,500 had been taken. He did not mean to convey that the expenditure in previous years had exceeded the Estimates, but only that the expenditure varied from year to year.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had no wish to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman. The Canal did not pay even the wages of the lock-keepers, and there was no justification for spending upon it an annually increasing sum. The Government would, in his opinion, do well to wash their hands of it. It was a bad security, and he must certainly protest against the present increase by moving the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £400, which would bring down the amount to what had been found sufficient for several years.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £162,902, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

MR. JACKSON said, he could hardly state with what pleasure he had listened to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman. Every year, for the last five or six years, the Government had been endeavouring to carry a Bill for the purpose of effecting that which the hon. Member suggested—namely, to get rid of this annual charge. Such a Bill was introduced last year, but they had been unable to obtain opportunities for passing it. He was extremely anxious to get rid of the Canal, and agreed with every word which had fallen from the hon. Member with respect to the bad bargain which the Government had made, and which they were most desirous of parting with. He would not say why they had been unable to succeed. The hon. Member was probably aware that there was before Parliament at that time a Bill promoted by the Lagan Navigation Company seeking powers to take over the Canal. He hoped that Bill would become law during the present Session, and then the Government would have

an opportunity of getting rid of this annual charge of about £1,100 a-year, and at the same time of accomplishing some good for several districts in Ireland, by opening up communication from Belfast to the other side of the country as a means of cheapening freights, carrying coals, and competing with as well as keeping the railways in order. He therefore hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion, but that he would assist the Government in passing the Bill to which he had referred.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was perfectly well acquainted with the provisions of the Bill brought in year after year to enable the Government to get rid of this Canal. He had always, however, looked upon the proposed arrangement as a job, and had therefore opposed the Bill. The Government had, year after year, submitted the proposal that the Canal should be handed over to the Lagan Navigation Company, with the condition that the Company should be paid £10,000 by way of a *douceur*. If the Canal was of any use to the Company, by all means let them have it, but why, he asked, should they receive £10,000 as well. The Company having at first asked £10,000, on finding that that was opposed, moderated their terms, but they still wanted a considerable sum. The amount which the Committee were now asked to vote was probably intended to put the Canal in as good a condition as was possible for the Lagan Navigation Company. The Government could get rid of the Canal by a stroke of the pen, and he did not see why this further expenditure should be incurred. He could inform the hon. Gentleman that the idea of a canal between Belfast and the Shannon was simply moonshine. There was no water to float a boat in some parts, and the idea of communication described by the hon. Gentleman was altogether chimerical. As his contention was that the Government could get rid of the Canal and wipe this item off the Estimates, he felt it his duty to press his Motion to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 46; Noes 93: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary

for Ireland, whether it was the practice to establish police barracks in the huts of evicted tenants, and whether a rent of three times the tenant's rent was paid for them? He pointed out that this practice led to an injustice in the case of tenants who were resisting the extortionate demands of landlords, because the Government paid the landlord a higher rent than he before obtained. He knew of one case in which three times the original rent of £15 had been paid to the landlord under the circumstances he had referred to. The Constabulary in Ireland were already sufficiently unpopular; but he looked upon this as the most odious use to which they could be put—namely, that of placing them in the hovels of evicted tenants.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he must point out to the hon. Member that his remarks had no reference to the present Vote. The hon. Gentleman would have an opportunity of referring to this subject when the Votes of Class III. were reached.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) said, he joined in the protest of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) against the Government taking this Vote in the absence of Irish Members, and if there was one circumstance more than another to which Irish Members would be likely to take exception, it was that the Vote provided for the maintenance of police in barracks. He found various sums charged for police barracks at Belfast, Roscommon, and Carlow, and he was bound to say that in his opinion all this money had been very badly expended. There were already too many barracks in Ireland. His attention had been directed the other day to the fact that in one town in Scotland, where there was a population of 35,000, the number of policemen did not exceed 18. Let the Committee compare that with a town in Ireland of 3,000 inhabitants, in which there were two police barracks, one at either end of the town, in each of which 15 or 20 policemen were stationed. He asked whether it was the intention of the Government to continue to spend the money of the taxpayers on the erection of police barracks in view of the time which he believed was fast approaching when all these police arrangements in Ireland would be done away with?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I can assure the hon. Member that the amount of barrack accommodation is strictly regulated by the number of police necessarily stationed in the district.

Mr. NOLAN said, in view of the unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he felt it his duty to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £3,000.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £160,302, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Nolan.)

The Committee divided:—Ayes 38; Noes 99: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(11.) £35,500, to complete the sum for Science and Art Buildings, Dublin.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked, whether the designs for these buildings were now satisfactory, and whether they had arrived at the end of this Vote?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he should not like to promise that they had reached the end of this expenditure. He thought the Committee had had to-night an example of the pressure constantly put upon the Government in matters of the kind. He was afraid there would be some expenditure both on account of furniture and fittings, in order to make the building habitable. It was true that there had been an increase on the Estimate, but there had been also a considerable enlargement of the buildings originally contemplated. The Government had no reason to believe that the contract which had been taken for the work would show any unreasonable excess.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he should like to hear the hon. Gentleman say that this Vote did complete the expenditure for the building. The building was exceedingly handsome, and, so far as he was able to judge, it was the best of its kind that had been produced during the last quarter of a century.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £37,731, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, the House was aware that a Royal Commission had been appointed about 18 months ago to inquire into the Public Departments for the conduct of Business and into the scale of their expenditure. That Commission, however, had no power to inquire into the expenditure of the House of Lords. It appeared to him that no one would argue that the expenditure of the two Houses of Parliament did not require revision, and that they were not conducted on the most lavish scale. A very large number of persons were employed, while the work could probably be done by a smaller number, and many of these persons appeared to receive a higher salary than was necessary. But, whether this were so or not, it was an important fact that the two Houses of Parliament were not within the scope of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Public Departments. Certainly an inquiry ought to be made into the present establishment of the two Houses. The First Lord of the Treasury would recollect that it had been his intention, when at the Exchequer, to propose the appointment of a joint Commission of both Houses to review their respective establishments. When he mentioned his proposal in that House it was not ill-received, and if things had gone on in their normal way the proposal might have been carried out. He believed that a very considerable reduction might be made in the expenditure of the Houses of Parliament. Of course there was a much larger question in connection with the Private Bill legislation of the two Houses. If a Committee of the two Houses came to the conclusion to remove all Private Bill legislation from the Houses of Parliament, then a much larger reduction would be pos-

sible. But apart from that, there was every reason to suppose that the expenditure of the two Houses was higher than it need be, and he would press upon the First Lord of the Treasury the advisability of appointing a Committee of both Houses for the purpose of reviewing their expenditure, which amounted to an enormous sum of money. The two Houses managed to spend on themselves something like £120,000 a-year. That expenditure had never been inquired into, as far as he was aware, and in view of the fact he trusted that his suggestion would receive favourable consideration at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It will be in the recollection of the Committee that last Session a discussion arose upon this Vote, and that I then undertook, on the part of the Government that inquiry should be made, at any rate in the House of Lords, as to the extent of the expenditure of that House. I am hardly aware, however, of the suggestion made by the noble Lord, that a Joint Committee should sit to inquire into the expenses of the two Houses of Parliament. The suggestion, however, that the subject should be treated in that way is very well worthy of consideration, and I think it is possible that a Joint Committee might be able to effect economies which would be acceptable to both Houses. But my noble Friend the Prime Minister has been engaged with a small Committee of the House of Lords in investigating the expense of the establishment of that House, and my noble Friend mentioned to me a few days ago that he had every reason to hope he would be able to recommend considerable economies in the expenditure. But as the Committee is still sitting, and has not reported, it would be premature for me to make any statement in respect of alterations which my noble Friend believes can be effected. As far as the House of Commons is concerned, I do not know whether the expenditure is greater than might reasonably be expected for Gentlemen of whom a large amount of attendance is required in the public interest. Still, I shall be exceedingly glad if the noble Lord's suggestion can be adopted. Without pledging myself absolutely, I will un-

dertake to confer with those who are well acquainted with the subject, and with the authorities of the House; and I will endeavour to make some recommendation to the House with the view of securing that this question shall be fully, impartially and carefully considered. The arrangement I made with the House occurred very late in the Session, and sufficient time has not elapsed for maturing the recommendations which may come down from the House of Lords, but as I have said the whole matter shall have our consideration.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he regretted to have to state that the right hon. Gentleman's reply was eminently unsatisfactory. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would have been more correct if he had said it would be premature if the Committee passed this Vote rather than that it was premature to state what would be done because the Committee was still sitting. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) pointed out that seven or eight months had elapsed since the right hon. Gentleman agreed, under great pressure, to have a Committee appointed, and now he came down and claimed to have carried out his pledge, by saying that the Committee had not finished its investigation. That seemed to him a most extraordinary way of fulfilling a pledge given in the House of Commons, and he ventured to say that if the Committee had passed this Vote without protest, the right hon. Gentleman would come down, after another nine months had elapsed, with his usual suavity of manner, and say that they must wait a little longer. He thought under the circumstances he was justified in saying that the right hon. Gentleman was trifling with the House. The sums paid to officials in the House of Lords were ridiculously high as compared with the officials of the House of Commons who had much more onerous duties to perform. The Sergeant-at-Arms in attendance on the Lord Chancellor had £1,500 a-year; then the Messenger to the Crown Solicitor had a salary of £1,500 a-year. But all these officers received additional payments for various offices which they discharged, besides their regular duties. The best way of dealing with this subject, however, was to make a comparison between the two Houses. He found that the Chairman of Ways and Means re-

ceived £2,500, and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords received the same salary, yet 20 minutes or half-an-hour was the average length of a sitting of the House of Lords, taking one sitting with another throughout the year. The Counsel to the Chairman of Committees received £1,500 per annum; the Examiner of Standing Orders £900; the Clerk of the Parliament £2,500, in addition to £500 as an allowance for a house; the Clerk Assistant £1,800; the Reading Clerk £1,200; the Chief Clerk of the Parliament Office £1,200; the Senior Clerk £1,000; the other Senior Clerks £1,000 each. He presumed that some of these gentlemen belonged to that mysterious body of gentlemen whose work it was to say "*La Reine le veut*" when the Royal Assent was given to Bills. Among other ornamental officials was Black Rod, an officer who received £2,000 a-year and also received emoluments as Admiral on the Retired List, in addition to fees which he received for his own use as an officer of the Garter. He thought this gentleman must be a happy man to have so many official salaries to draw at the expense of the taxpayers of the country; while his only duty was to take part in the piece of periodical tomfoolery of knocking at the door of the House of Commons and summoning the Speaker to attend the House of Lords, and to give Members of the House of Commons leave to take ladies and gentlemen into the other House. Then there was the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who received £1,000, and the principal Door-keeper, who received £600 for discharging duties which any ordinary porter could be found to perform for 25s. a-week. Then there was a further array of Assistant Messengers and Porters who received £2,225 between them, and there was a Librarian who received £810. The duties of this gentleman must be very light; because he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was satisfied that not one Peer in a dozen ever read a book in the Library of the House of Lords or elsewhere. This gentleman, however, had the aid of an Assistant Librarian with the salary of £439. He would not pursue the subject further than to say that the Estimates of the House of Lords were a perfect scandal, and he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Randolph Churchill) had risen to protest against them. As he would not be in Order in moving the postponement of this Vote, he should propose its reduction by the sum of £1,000, part of the salary of the Chairman of Committees.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords,—be reduced by the sum of £1,000."—*(Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)*

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not think the First Lord of the Treasury had a clear recollection of what passed last year on this Vote. The salaries of the officers of the House of Lords were then discussed at length on a Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). In the course of that discussion he (Mr. Childers) had called the attention of the House to the discrepancy between the salaries of the officials of the two Houses.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Motion before the Committee was for the reduction of the Vote in respect of a single item, and that this should be disposed of before the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was dealt with.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was quite willing to withdraw his Motion in order to allow the right hon. Gentleman to proceed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CHILDERS said, on the occasion referred to it was his duty to take part in the debate, and he had called especial attention to the great excess of the Estimate for the House of Lords over that of the House of Commons. On that occasion, he had ventured to make an appeal to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who was opposing the Vote, to withdraw his amendment, if the First Lord of the Treasury would give an undertaking that when a vacancy arose, the successor to the office should not receive more than the amount of salary that would be paid in the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had replied that he would undertake on the part of the Government, that the subject should receive consideration in the spirit in which

he (Mr. Childers) had suggested it should be considered; and that although he could not undertake absolutely that when vacancies occurred, the salaries should be in each case and in every respect in accordance with the salaries in the House of Commons, he would give an engagement that full inquiry should be made with a view to the salaries being brought down to the amounts paid in the House of Commons. He (Mr. Childers) was not then quite satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in reply to his further observations, the right hon. Gentleman said he would undertake to open negotiations with the other House with a view to carry out this arrangement at once. The right hon. Gentleman had now told the Committee that he had had some communication with his Colleagues and the Prime Minister with reference to this matter; but he would point out that this was a very different thing from opening negotiations to carry out the arrangement at once—namely, that the officials in the House of Lords should be put on the same footing as those in the House of Commons. Under the circumstances, he thought the Committee must call for something more definite from the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was an important one, and ought not to be put off. In his opinion, some pressure should be used, and that it should be shown that the wish of the House of Commons in this affair was paramount. He would, therefore, urgently ask the Secretary to the Treasury to allow this Vote to be withdrawn for the present, as there was no urgency in the matter, in order that a Joint Committee of the two Houses might be immediately appointed to consider the whole question. If necessary, Votes on Account could, of course, be taken; but they ought not to allow this very important matter to drag on. It was, therefore, important that the Joint Committee should be appointed to go into the matter.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) is asking rather more than the circumstances of the case demand. The discussion to which he refers, took place in the month of July last year, when, under the circumstances in which we were placed, it was almost impossible to get together an adequate Committee charged with these duties in the House

of Lords. At the earliest time this year, however, the Committee met to consider the question, and is now pursuing its inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the revision of salaries which might be proposed could not, in justice, be made to apply to the present year. What we wished at the time was, that as vacancies occurred, no office should be filled without due consideration, with regard to the engagement made. Well, Sir, that has been done. The principle has been acted on in the case of the office of Taxing Master to the House of Lords which has been vacated. The late holder of the Office received £1,000 a-year, and the Office has been filled by the appointment of a person to perform the duties at £250 a-year and two clerks at £150 a-year each, the gross payment being now £550 in lieu of £1,000 formerly paid. It is perfectly true that there is an increase in the Vote, of this amount, as the Taxing Master's fees did not appear at all, but as the fees will now be paid into the Exchequer, there will be a saving of £450 a-year with reference to this Office. I only mention this by way of evidence, that the Treasury and the Government are anxious to carry out the engagement made, that it is being carried out, and that the inquiry is of a searching character. It was not suggested last year that the inquiry should be conducted by a Joint Committee, and I think it only reasonable to leave it to the House of Lords to make its own proposals with regard to any reduction of the establishment that may be considered desirable. But I have undertaken now to consider whether a Joint Committee of the two Houses can sit with advantage. I am inclined to regard the proposal with great favour, because it is most desirable that there should be agreement between the two Houses as to the cost of their establishments. The present inquiry has already proceeded to some extent; but I should certainly be disposed to press upon my Colleagues in the House of Lords, the desirability of the appointment of a Joint Committee. I trust I have said enough to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman opposite that Her Majesty's Government have done as much as they could reasonably be expected to do in the time which has elapsed to fulfil their engagement. We have already effected an economy in re-

year after year in its present condition. While he hoped that the Treasury would exercise a wise check upon extravagance, he was bound to say we were not a nation of paupers, and that if we did keep up establishments in this country, those establishments ought to be made to present a decent front to the public. As long as he could remember South Kensington there had been a hideous spectacle of an unfinished front. He hoped the Government would either finish the Establishment or abandon it.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had promised the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington the Return he desired. To make that Return as complete as possible, he suggested that it should not only deal with the cost of buildings, but with the cost of examples from the foundation of the Museum, and with the value of the gifts made to the Museum since its establishment. He was sure that the country had no idea of the value of the Art treasures which the Museum possessed.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would endeavour to prepare the Return so as to do full justice to the views of the right hon. Gentleman as well as to those of the noble Lord. He wished to allude to one observation which fell from the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). The cost of the proposed addition would be about £300,000. That was the cost arrived at by a very elaborate process of arithmetic. The first outlay was estimated to be £233,000. The experience he had had in dealing with figures was that the outlay was absolutely certain to be exceeded, and that it was very doubtful indeed whether economy could be effected in the Estimate.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL begged the First Lord of the Treasury not to mix up the information he (Lord Randolph Churchill) required, which was valuable information, with the information the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) asked for. How could the Government give an estimate of the value of the gifts to the South Kensington Museum? What he asked for was a Return of the capital outlay on bricks and mortar in connection with South Kensington, and he hoped the First Lord of the Treasury would limit the Return to that outlay. If the right hon.

Gentleman opposite wished to have another Return he could move for it.

Vote agreed to.

(2.) £8,940, to complete the sum for British Museum Buildings.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) said, he trusted that he would be in Order in referring to the question of the lighting of the British Museum at night. It was within the recollection of many hon. Members of the House that last year, in the course of a debate upon this question, the First Lord of the Treasury gave an assurance that the matter should have his full consideration. He (Colonel Duncan) could not find any mention in the Votes of the lighting of the Museum by night. It was possible that this might be owing to the uncertainty of everything in London in consequence of the introduction of the Local Government Bill; but he implored the First Lord of the Treasury and the Government not to forget this subject. There were many people in London who were only able to visit the British Museum at night. Representing, as he did, the district in which the Museum was situated, he asked the House to bear in mind the great success which had attended the opening of Museums at night elsewhere, and reminded the House that the Trustees of the British Museum had already twice recommended that action in the matter should be taken.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, his recollection of the debate of last year was that there was a general concurrence of opinion that the first step in reference to lighting should be taken at the Natural History Museum. That was a most popular Institution for the people of the Metropolis, and he believed that if it were lighted up at night it would be very largely visited.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the Government undertook last year to consider this question very carefully, and they obtained an estimate of the cost of the plant necessary for the lighting up of the Museum, and also of the cost of maintenance. Unfortunately, he had not got the Papers with him, as no Notice was given that this question would be raised. To the best of his recollection, however, it was estimated that the plant itself would involve an outlay of

Sir George Campbell

£30,000, and that the cost of maintenance would amount to £7,000 a-year. That, of course, referred to the two Museums. He believed that the cost of maintenance in the case of the Natural History Museum would be about £3,000 a-year. They had careful observations made as to the frequenters of, perhaps, the more attractive Museum at South Kensington, which was lighted up at night, and they came to the conclusion that they would hardly be justified in asking the House of Commons to incur so large an original outlay, and the annual charge which would be involved. Of course, it was for the House of Commons to say whether the hands of the Government should be forced in a matter of this kind. In addition to a question of cost, there were the dangers incurred in connection with night exhibitions in London to be considered. These Collections were of very great value; indeed, they could not be measured simply by money value, or by their cost. In many cases it would be quite impossible to replace the exhibits if, by any accident, they should be lost, and accidents were more likely to occur at night than in the day-time, when supervision was more easily exercised. The Government took counsel with those who were, next to themselves, bound to care for these Collections, and the view the Trustees held was that they would hardly be justified in asking the Government to incur the risk of lighting up the Museums at night. Under these circumstances, and having given the matter most serious consideration, with the fullest possible desire to open these Collections to the largest number of persons who, by any possibility, might visit them, the Government thought they would not be justified in putting an Estimate on the Vote for the plant required, and for the annual charge which would be involved.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could only express extreme regret at the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury. He confessed that he was astounded to learn that the cost of plant was so enormous. He should have thought that with the advance of Science the plant would not have been so tremendously expensive. Certainly the lighting of the Natural History Museum at night was not open to as much objection as the lighting of the British Museum. The exhibits were not of a

very inflammable character, and if they were destroyed they could be replaced by new ones.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said it was unfortunate that the First Lord of the Treasury had not the figures of the estimate with him. It appeared to him that the estimate as to the cost of the plant was far in excess of what it ought to be; and he was at a loss to understand why the lighting of the British Museum at night should cost £7,000 a-year.

MR. W. H. SMITH: And the Natural History Museum.

MR. BROADHURST said, that in that case there was not very much to complain of. It was an intolerable thing that a great Institution like the British Museum should be a closed building to the great mass of the people of London. The Museum was situated in the very heart of the Metropolis, within easy reach of hundreds of thousands of the working people of London; and it was now practically closed to them, except on holidays and times when they could not visit it. Most people did not cease work until 6 or 7 o'clock, and even later, and if Museums were kept open until a reasonable hour at night—say 10 o'clock—they would at once get rid of the very vexed question, on which there were strong opinions on both sides, the Sunday opening of these Institutions. He, as one strongly opposed to the opening of Museums on Sundays, felt that unless they were prepared to meet the people by throwing these Institutions open in the evening, the progress of the Sunday opening movement would be very great. As to the danger attending the lighting of the Museums at night, he could not help thinking that it was much exaggerated. The South Kensington Museum had been open at night for a number of years, and, so far as he remembered, there had never been a serious accident in consequence. He did not see why it should not be as easy to guard against accidents, or why accidents would be more likely to occur, at the British Museum and in the Natural History Museum than at South Kensington.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, that last year there was something almost amounting to a promise given by the Government that during the course of the financial year an effort would be

made to see whether that which had been so long desired by the London public could not be granted. He could not help feeling that even if the cost were as large as represented by the First Lord of the Treasury, this country ought not to hesitate to defray it, seeing that thereby an opportunity would be afforded to the working and toiling masses of the Metropolis to visit these two great Museums. He was disposed to demur to the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) as to the desirability of first of all lighting up at night the Natural History Museum, because he took it that, for an Institution whose object was to educate the people, the British Museum had a far larger claim on their attention than the Natural History Museum, setting aside for the moment the more central position of the older Institution. He strongly urged the Government, if they wished to afford an opportunity to those who had but few opportunities of seeing these great National Educational Establishments, to turn their attention seriously to the subject.

Vote agreed to.

(3.) £4,000, to complete the sum for Edinburgh University Buildings.

(4.) £17,626, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings.

(5.) £14,145, to complete the sum for Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he desired to ask the Minister in charge of the Vote to state what was the condition of the works in connection with Dover Harbour?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman was aware of the answer which was given yesterday by the First Lord of the Treasury to the Question put upon this subject. It would be within the recollection of the Committee that last year, when this question was raised, it was promised that the question as to further expenditure on Dover Harbour should be considered. The question hardly arose upon this Vote, because, as the hon. Member knew, Dover Harbour was rather connected with the

building of the convict prison there. However, he had no hesitation in saying that the Government having given their most serious consideration to this question, having gone through the Report of the Committee which sat on the question, and even having regard to the very large expenditure which had been already incurred upon the convict prison at Dover, had come to the conclusion that the cost of such a harbour as had been suggested would be so enormous, and that the advantage was so doubtful, that for the present, at any rate, they ought not to ask Parliament to vote any more money in respect of the Harbour at Dover.

Vote agreed to.

(6.) £9,530, to complete the sum for Lighthouses Abroad.

(7.) £29,180, to complete the sum for Peterhead Harbour.

(8.) £148,848, to complete the sum for Rates on Government Property.

(9.) £7,500, to complete the sum for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

(10.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £163,302, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of several Public Buildings in the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works, Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations, and for Repayments to Baronies under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.'"

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he would not agree to postpone the Vote until next Monday, when Members from Ireland could be in their places? He thought it unfair to take Votes of this kind in the absence of Members who were interested in them.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): There is no Notice of any opposition whatever against this Vote, or the next. If there had been the slightest intimation of opposition, I should not have taken them to-night; but the hon. Gentleman may be satisfied that the Report will not be taken until the time he has named.

Mr. Isaacs

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he rather demurred to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Notice of opposition to the Vote, because many questions might arise upon them with regard to which Members did not feel themselves bound to give Notice on the Paper. However, he would not press that point. With regard to the National Education Buildings, he believed it was a fact that the Estimates of previous years had been very considerably exceeded by the National Education Commissioners in connection with buildings for ordinary schools. The position of the Treasury and the Board of Works (Ireland) and the National Education Commissioners had been recently considered; certain resolutions had been adopted; certain regulations drawn up and instructions issued to the National Education Commissioners. Those instructions would limit the powers of the Commissioners to advance money for building schools under the Statute now in force. But many managers of schools had undertaken liabilities under what they considered to be a Parliamentary guarantee, and the restrictions imposed would very materially embarrass a number of gentlemen who had no reason whatsoever to suppose that the powers of the National Education Commissioners would be curtailed or suspended. That was the first point that he had to bring before the attention of the Government. His next point was connected with the Ulster Canal. Last year the Canal figured for the sum of £705. The Canal was in the hands of the Government; it was a security which they had taken, and it had constituted a heavy charge on the Exchequer for many years. The Government had tried from time to time to get rid of it; but the terms offered by the parties were so onerous and unreasonable that the House had refused to entertain them. The sum now proposed in aid of the Ulster Canal was, that year, £1,500, and there was no explanation whatever of the increase. He should be glad to receive some information from the Secretary to the Treasury on this subject. Then, on page 83, there was the sum of £5,000 on account of repayment of the balance under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act of 1883. He believed the Government were able to advance the sum of £40,000

a-year, at the rate of 2 per cent on the amount of capital invested, where the guarantee of the barony had been given and had been discharged by payment of a percentage of the guaranteed dividends. He asked what were the baronies which had made payment, and what were the Companies to whom payment had been made, and also the amounts paid?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, that the relation between the Treasury and the Board of Works and the National Education Commissioners in Dublin had been very correctly stated by the hon. Member as having recently undergone considerable revision. As he had explained to the House on a previous occasion, it had come to the knowledge of the Treasury that the grants approved by the National Education Commissioners had largely exceeded the provision made by Parliament, and it was necessary that some arrangement should be come to by which effective control should be exercised over those grants, and particularly with regard to the point of Supplementary Estimates. It had been his duty to put matters in such a form that there should be effective financial control, and that Supplementary Estimates should, if possible, be avoided, at the same time without disregarding what, at present at all events, he considered to be the obligation of the Government, as far as possible, to keep to the grants which had already been approved. Although he had not yet received figures which would enable him to give particular information to the Committee, yet he was having a statement prepared which would show in detail the amount of expenditure upon every school for which a grant had been sanctioned, and which was likely to come in course of payment during the current financial year and during subsequent years. He hoped that when he received those figures it would be found that the £40,000 in the Estimates for this year might be, if not entirely adequate to meet the actual requirements, at all events so nearly adequate that no Supplementary Estimates would be necessary, and no serious inconvenience would happen in the case of schools in process of building. The sum of £40,000 a-year for the next three years ought, in his opinion, to meet the full require-

ments of the case. With regard to the Ulster Canal, the cost of its maintenance had been in recent years, upon the average, about £1,100. It often happened, of course, that the expenditure was more in one year than another, according to the amount of work undertaken, and repairs necessary in particular years. With regard to the payments by baronies under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, he need not remind the Committee that Parliament had, on former occasions, passed Acts which imposed upon the Exchequer certain charges with regard to tramways made under certain Statutes if they did not earn sufficient money to meet the interest guaranteed. He did not wish to take a gloomy view of the matter; but he was afraid that some of the tramways sanctioned, like railways similarly sanctioned, would not, for some time at least, earn sufficient to pay the guaranteed interest, and that a larger sum than was asked for this year might be found necessary to meet the deficiency which might arise. The sum in the present Estimate had been arrived at on careful inquiry in each case. He had a list of the amounts likely to be earned and expended, and of the amount of charge likely to come upon the Exchequer. He was not able to furnish the names of the baronies at that moment; but he could give the hon. Member the names of the Companies. The total amount of increase was £9,000, and, therefore, in taking £5,000, the Government had made provision for very little more than half.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the Secretary to the Treasury had told the Committee little beyond the fact that, although £700 a-year had been taken for some years on account of the Canal, that amount had always been exceeded. This was one of the things which made proceedings in that House so unsatisfactory. The Estimates were really no check upon the expenditure of the Government, and had never been a check upon the Board of Works in Ireland. The Ulster Canal was a bad bargain, and, in his opinion, every sovereign spent upon it, so far as the public interest was concerned, had been practically thrown away. An Estimate was now brought forward exceeding by more than 100 per cent what had been asked for in former years.

Mr. Jackson

Mr. JACKSON said, that what he had stated was that the average expenditure amounted to £1,100, although that amount was sometimes exceeded. He had explained to the Committee that last year £705 was taken, because it was not anticipated that this amount would be exceeded; but it was found that a larger expenditure would be necessary this year, and accordingly £1,500 had been taken. He did not mean to convey that the expenditure in previous years had exceeded the Estimates, but only that the expenditure varied from year to year.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had no wish to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman. The Canal did not pay even the wages of the lock-keepers, and there was no justification for spending upon it an annually increasing sum. The Government would, in his opinion, do well to wash their hands of it. It was a bad security, and he must certainly protest against the present increase by moving the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £400, which would bring down the amount to what had been found sufficient for several years.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £162,902, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Mr. JACKSON said, he could hardly state with what pleasure he had listened to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman. Every year, for the last five or six years, the Government had been endeavouring to carry a Bill for the purpose of effecting that which the hon. Member suggested—namely, to get rid of this annual charge. Such a Bill was introduced last year, but they had been unable to obtain opportunities for passing it. He was extremely anxious to get rid of the Canal, and agreed with every word which had fallen from the hon. Member with respect to the bad bargain which the Government had made, and which they were most desirous of parting with. He would not say why they had been unable to succeed. The hon. Member was probably aware that there was before Parliament at that time a Bill promoted by the Lagan Navigation Company seeking powers to take over the Canal. He hoped that Bill would become law during the present Session, and then the Government would have

an opportunity of getting rid of this annual charge of about £1,100 a-year, and at the same time of accomplishing some good for several districts in Ireland, by opening up communication from Belfast to the other side of the country as a means of cheapening freights, carrying coals, and competing with as well as keeping the railways in order. He therefore hoped the hon. Member would not press his Motion, but that he would assist the Government in passing the Bill to which he had referred.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he was perfectly well acquainted with the provisions of the Bill brought in year after year to enable the Government to get rid of this Canal. He had always, however, looked upon the proposed arrangement as a job, and had therefore opposed the Bill. The Government had, year after year, submitted the proposal that the Canal should be handed over to the Lagan Navigation Company, with the condition that the Company should be paid £10,000 by way of a douceur. If the Canal was of any use to the Company, by all means let them have it, but why, he asked, should they receive £10,000 as well. The Company having at first asked £10,000, on finding that that was opposed, moderated their terms, but they still wanted a considerable sum. The amount which the Committee were now asked to vote was probably intended to put the Canal in as good a condition as was possible for the Lagan Navigation Company. The Government could get rid of the Canal by a stroke of the pen, and he did not see why this further expenditure should be incurred. He could inform the hon. Gentleman that the idea of a canal between Belfast and the Shannon was simply moonshine. There was no water to float a boat in some parts, and the idea of communication described by the hon. Gentleman was altogether chimerical. As his contention was that the Government could get rid of the Canal and wipe this item off the Estimates, he felt it his duty to press his Motion to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 46; Noes 93: Majority 47.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Chief Secretary

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for Ireland, whether it was the practice to establish police barracks in the huts of evicted tenants, and whether a rent of three times the tenant's rent was paid for them? He pointed out that this practice led to an injustice in the case of tenants who were resisting the extortionate demands of landlords, because the Government paid the landlord a higher rent than he before obtained. He knew of one case in which three times the original rent of £15 had been paid to the landlord under the circumstances he had referred to. The Constabulary in Ireland were already sufficiently unpopular; but he looked upon this as the most odious use to which they could be put—namely, that of placing them in the hovels of evicted tenants.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he must point out to the hon. Member that his remarks had no reference to the present Vote. The hon. Gentleman would have an opportunity of referring to this subject when the Votes of Class III. were reached.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) said, he joined in the protest of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) against the Government taking this Vote in the absence of Irish Members, and if there was one circumstance more than another to which Irish Members would be likely to take exception, it was that the Vote provided for the maintenance of police in barracks. He found various sums charged for police barracks at Belfast, Roscommon, and Carlow, and he was bound to say that in his opinion all this money had been very badly expended. There were already too many barracks in Ireland. His attention had been directed the other day to the fact that in one town in Scotland, where there was a population of 35,000, the number of policemen did not exceed 18. Let the Committee compare that with a town in Ireland of 3,000 inhabitants, in which there were two police barracks, one at either end of the town, in each of which 15 or 20 policemen were stationed. He asked whether it was the intention of the Government to continue to spend the money of the taxpayers on the erection of police barracks in view of the time which he believed was fast approaching when all these police arrangements in Ireland would be done away with?

Y

ceived £2,500, and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords received the same salary, yet 20 minutes or half-an-hour was the average length of a sitting of the House of Lords, taking one sitting with another throughout the year. The Counsel to the Chairman of Committees received £1,500 per annum; the Examiner of Standing Orders £900; the Clerk of the Parliament £2,500, in addition to £500 as an allowance for a house; the Clerk Assistant £1,800; the Reading Clerk £1,200; the Chief Clerk of the Parliament Office £1,200; the Senior Clerk £1,000; the other Senior Clerks £1,000 each. He presumed that some of these gentlemen belonged to that mysterious body of gentlemen whose work it was to say "*La Reine le veut*" when the Royal Assent was given to Bills. Among other ornamental officials was Black Rod, an officer who received £2,000 a-year and also received emoluments as Admiral on the Retired List, in addition to fees which he received for his own use as an officer of the Garter. He thought this gentleman must be a happy man to have so many official salaries to draw at the expense of the taxpayers of the country; while his only duty was to take part in the piece of periodical tomfoolery of knocking at the door of the House of Commons and summoning the Speaker to attend the House of Lords, and to give Members of the House of Commons leave to take ladies and gentlemen into the other House. Then there was the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who received £1,000, and the principal Door-keeper, who received £600 for discharging duties which any ordinary porter could be found to perform for 25s. a-week. Then there was a further array of Assistant Messengers and Porters who received £2,225 between them, and there was a Librarian who received £810. The duties of this gentleman must be very light; because he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was satisfied that not one Peer in a dozen ever read a book in the Library of the House of Lords or elsewhere. This gentleman, however, had the aid of an Assistant Librarian with the salary of £439. He would not pursue the subject further than to say that the Estimates of the House of Lords were a perfect scandal, and he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Randolph Churchill) had risen to protest against them. As he would not be in Order in moving the postponement of this Vote, he should propose its reduction by the sum of £1,000, part of the salary of the Chairman of Committees.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords,—be reduced by the sum of £1,000."—*(Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)*

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not think the First Lord of the Treasury had a clear recollection of what passed last year on this Vote. The salaries of the officers of the House of Lords were then discussed at length on a Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). In the course of that discussion he (Mr. Childers) had called the attention of the House to the discrepancy between the salaries of the officials of the two Houses.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Motion before the Committee was for the reduction of the Vote in respect of a single item, and that this should be disposed of before the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was dealt with.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was quite willing to withdraw his Motion in order to allow the right hon. Gentleman to proceed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CHILDERS said, on the occasion referred to it was his duty to take part in the debate, and he had called especial attention to the great excess of the Estimate for the House of Lords over that of the House of Commons. On that occasion, he had ventured to make an appeal to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who was opposing the Vote, to withdraw his amendment, if the First Lord of the Treasury would give an undertaking that when a vacancy arose, the successor to the office should not receive more than the amount of salary that would be paid in the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had replied that he would undertake on the part of the Government, that the subject should receive consideration in the spirit in which

he (Mr. Childers) had suggested it should be considered; and that although he could not undertake absolutely that when vacancies occurred, the salaries should be in each case and in every respect in accordance with the salaries in the House of Commons, he would give an engagement that full inquiry should be made with a view to the salaries being brought down to the amounts paid in the House of Commons. He (Mr. Childers) was not then quite satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in reply to his further observations, the right hon. Gentleman said he would undertake to open negotiations with the other House with a view to carry out this arrangement at once. The right hon. Gentleman had now told the Committee that he had had some communication with his Colleagues and the Prime Minister with reference to this matter; but he would point out that this was a very different thing from opening negotiations to carry out the arrangement at once—namely, that the officials in the House of Lords should be put on the same footing as those in the House of Commons. Under the circumstances, he thought the Committee must call for something more definite from the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was an important one, and ought not to be put off. In his opinion, some pressure should be used, and that it should be shown that the wish of the House of Commons in this affair was paramount. He would, therefore, urgently ask the Secretary to the Treasury to allow this Vote to be withdrawn for the present, as there was no urgency in the matter, in order that a Joint Committee of the two Houses might be immediately appointed to consider the whole question. If necessary, Votes on Account could, of course, be taken; but they ought not to allow this very important matter to drag on. It was, therefore, important that the Joint Committee should be appointed to go into the matter.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) is asking rather more than the circumstances of the case demand. The discussion to which he refers, took place in the month of July last year, when, under the circumstances in which we were placed, it was almost impossible to get together an adequate Committee charged with these duties in the House

of Lords. At the earliest time this year, however, the Committee met to consider the question, and is now pursuing its inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the revision of salaries which might be proposed could not, in justice, be made to apply to the present year. What we wished at the time was, that as vacancies occurred, no office should be filled without due consideration, with regard to the engagement made. Well, Sir, that has been done. The principle has been acted on in the case of the office of Taxing Master to the House of Lords which has been vacated. The late holder of the Office received £1,000 a-year, and the Office has been filled by the appointment of a person to perform the duties at £250 a-year and two clerks at £150 a-year each, the gross payment being now £550 in lieu of £1,000 formerly paid. It is perfectly true that there is an increase in the Vote, of this amount, as the Taxing Master's fees did not appear at all, but as the fees will now be paid into the Exchequer, there will be a saving of £450 a-year with reference to this Office. I only mention this by way of evidence that the Treasury and the Government are anxious to carry out the engagement made, that it is being carried out, and that the inquiry is of a searching character. It was not suggested last year that the inquiry should be conducted by a Joint Committee, and I think it only reasonable to leave it to the House of Lords to make its own proposals with regard to any reduction of the establishment that may be considered desirable. But I have undertaken now to consider whether a Joint Committee of the two Houses can sit with advantage. I am inclined to regard the proposal with great favour, because it is most desirable that there should be agreement between the two Houses as to the cost of their establishments. The present inquiry has already proceeded to some extent; but I should certainly be disposed to press upon my Colleagues in the House of Lords, the desirability of the appointment of a Joint Committee. I trust I have said enough to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman opposite that Her Majesty's Government have done as much as they could reasonably be expected to do in the time which has elapsed to fulfil their engagement. We have already effected an economy in re-

spect of one Office alone, and the Committee may be assured that steps will be taken in the direction of further economy as vacancies arise.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he thought the statement of the right hon. Gentleman quite satisfactory. It would be hardly possible for the Government to withdraw the Vote, as it would appear like a refusal of the House of Commons to pay the salaries of the present year. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) opposite would see that the withdrawal of the Vote under the circumstances could not take place without great disrespect being shown to the other House, and he would go further, and say that had he known that the pledge given by the Government last year had been carried out as it now appeared to have been, he should have abstained from the remarks he had made. He agreed that it was impossible that an inquiry could have been conducted in the short space of time—barely one month—that remained of last Session; and it would not have been easy to get together an authoritative Committee of the House of Lords to sit through the months of August and September. They had heard that the Committee had made great progress. He did not know how it was composed; but they might expect that it would make its Report before long, that it would be in the direction of economy and that it would be communicated to that House. He therefore hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bring into this discussion no unnecessary heat or accusations, but be satisfied with the general assurance which his right hon. Friend had been able to give with regard to the steps to be taken for the solution of the question. There seemed to be a general agreement between both sides, that steps should be taken to review the Establishment of both Houses, and he had a distinct recollection that in the Autumn Session of 1886, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had proposed that there should be a Joint Committee appointed; and that this proposal was accepted by his Colleagues at the time. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had urged that the salaries in the House of Lords should be reduced to the level of those in the House of Commons; but that, in his opinion, would

Mr. W. H. Smith

not be at all adequate. It was most desirable that there should be a Joint Committee; because, otherwise, either House would be indisposed to make its salaries lower. If they appointed a Joint Committee the Members of both Houses would come together, and the whole subject, having regard to the work to be performed, would be threshed out, and a better result would follow. He believed that a considerable reduction would take place in respect of the Establishments of both Houses when the subject had been thoroughly examined in the way suggested, by a Committee empowered to take evidence as to hours, labour, and remuneration of the officials. He felt confident that the First Lord of the Treasury would press this question upon his Colleagues and that no unreasonable delay would take place, so that when the next Session came round, the two Houses would be in possession of fuller information on the subject of their respective expenditures.

MR. CHILDERS: After the explanation given by the First Lord of the Treasury I may be permitted to say that I am satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman did act in the spirit of the pledge which he made last year. I was not aware of the alteration which has been made in the case of the successor of the late Taxing Master of the House of Lords. I was under the impression that there had been too great delay, but I am now satisfied that this is not the case, and therefore agree with the noble Lord that we ought not to postpone the Vote. If the right hon. Gentleman will undertake that a Joint Committee shall be shortly appointed, I think the object I had in view will be obtained.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he should like to hear from the First Lord of the Treasury the names of the Members of the Committee of the House of Lords and how often the Committee had met.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I should be glad to give the hon. Member the information asked for if I had it, but at this moment I do not know the names of the Members of the Committee. I have stated to the Committee all the information received from the Prime Minister to-day, and also the information conveyed to the Secretary to the Treasury

by the Clerk of the Parliaments. With regard to the sittings of the Committee, it has met more than once, and I know that considerable progress has been made in the direction of economy. That I say on my responsibility in this House, and with it I trust the hon. Member will be satisfied. I am personally in favour of a Joint Committee being appointed, and I hope it will be possible to arrange that such a Committee shall take this matter into consideration; but I must of course confer with my Colleagues and the Prime Minister on the subject before giving an undertaking that the Committee will be appointed.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): Am I to understand that the Committee of the Black Rod Department is considering the whole expenditure voted by this House.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, whether the Secretary to the Treasury had any information as to the number of times the Committee had sat? Was it correct to say that the Committee had only met once? Because, if so, how was it possible to say that considerable progress had been made?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, there was considerable difficulty in giving particular information on this subject, and the question with regard to how many times the Committee had met formally was one which he was unable to answer. But he was able to assure the hon. Member that the investigation which was being made was most thorough, and reached throughout the whole expenditure of the House of Lords. From the information given that day he had come to the conclusion that there had been a very searching inquiry, and that the proceedings of the Committee were approaching a point at which they would be able to report the result of their investigations.

MR. MUNDELLA asked, if the hon. Gentleman would communicate the Report to that House?

MR. JACKSON said, he was unable to answer that question until the Committee had reported to its own House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked, if the hon. Gentleman would give the names of the Committee, and the number of times it had met by the time the Report of the Vote was taken.

MR. JACKSON said, he had no hesitation in saying that he would inquire whether there was any objection to that proposal. As far as he was concerned, he was perfectly willing to do so.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would put the question again on Monday.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he thought it would be exceedingly unfair to press the Financial Secretary to the Treasury any further on this matter. He desired to ask the hon. Gentleman if he could give an explanation of the system under which officials of the House of Lords were placed on the retired list. There was in the House of Lords an anomalous institution called the Fee Fund. A sum of money was invested, and the interest, together with fees on judicial proceedings, Private Bills, and the taxation of costs, was paid into the fund, while, on the other hand, various sums were written off; one was paid into the Exchequer, another went as remuneration to those concerned in the taxation of costs, and a third sum was applied for superannuation allowances to certain officers of the House of Lords. It was with regard to the last item that he desired information, and he asked what was the authority which decided upon the retiring and pensioning of the officers of the House of Lords? Who was it that decided when money was to be drawn from the Fee Fund for superannuation allowances; and what was the authority which sanctioned the grant which was annually made from the Exchequer, extra receipts in respect of the Fee Fund in aid of the retiring allowances? All these things were so mixed up as to be perfectly unintelligible; he defied anyone thoroughly to understand from the Paper the system on which the retiring allowances to the officers of the House of Lords were regulated. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to impart some information on this subject, which he assured him could be done without any breach of confidence.

MR. JACKSON said, the hon. Member was aware that there was a sum at the disposal of the House of Lords, the result of the accumulation of fees received. This fund, which amounted to about £43,000, is invested, and the deficiency of interest supplemented to the extent which might be necessary for the payment of these pensions. It was

ceived £2,500, and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords received the same salary, yet 20 minutes or half-an-hour was the average length of a sitting of the House of Lords, taking one sitting with another throughout the year. The Counsel to the Chairman of Committees received £1,500 per annum; the Examiner of Standing Orders £900; the Clerk of the Parliament £2,500, in addition to £500 as an allowance for a house; the Clerk Assistant £1,800; the Reading Clerk £1,200; the Chief Clerk of the Parliament Office £1,200; the Senior Clerk £1,000; the other Senior Clerks £1,000 each. He presumed that some of these gentlemen belonged to that mysterious body of gentlemen whose work it was to say "*La Reine le veut*" when the Royal Assent was given to Bills. Among other ornamental officials was Black Rod, an officer who received £2,000 a-year and also received emoluments as Admiral on the Retired List, in addition to fees which he received for his own use as an officer of the Garter. He thought this gentleman must be a happy man to have so many official salaries to draw at the expense of the taxpayers of the country; while his only duty was to take part in the piece of periodical tomfoolery of knocking at the door of the House of Commons and summoning the Speaker to attend the House of Lords, and to give Members of the House of Commons leave to take ladies and gentlemen into the other House. Then there was the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who received £1,000, and the principal Doorkeeper, who received £600 for discharging duties which any ordinary porter could be found to perform for 25s. a-week. Then there was a further array of Assistant Messengers and Porters who received £2,225 between them, and there was a Librarian who received £810. The duties of this gentleman must be very light; because he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was satisfied that not one Peer in a dozen ever read a book in the Library of the House of Lords or elsewhere. This gentleman, however, had the aid of an Assistant Librarian with the salary of £439. He would not pursue the subject further than to say that the Estimates of the House of Lords were a perfect scandal, and he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord

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Randolph Churchill) had risen to protest against them. As he would not be in Order in moving the postponement of this Vote, he should propose its reduction by the sum of £1,000, part of the salary of the Chairman of Committees.

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THE CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Motion before the Committee was for the reduction of the Vote in respect of a single item, and that this should be disposed of before the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was dealt with.

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Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CHILDERS said, on the occasion referred to it was his duty to take part in the debate, and he had called especial attention to the great excess of the Estimate for the House of Lords over that of the House of Commons. On that occasion, he had ventured to make an appeal to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who was opposing the Vote, to withdraw his amendment, if the First Lord of the Treasury would give an undertaking that when a vacancy arose, the successor to the office should not receive more than the amount of salary that would be paid in the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman had replied that he would undertake on the part of the Government, that the subject should receive consideration in the spirit in which

he (Mr. Childers) had suggested it should be considered; and that although he could not undertake absolutely that when vacancies occurred, the salaries should be in each case and in every respect in accordance with the salaries in the House of Commons, he would give an engagement that full inquiry should be made with a view to the salaries being brought down to the amounts paid in the House of Commons. He (Mr. Childers) was not then quite satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in reply to his further observations, the right hon. Gentleman said he would undertake to open negotiations with the other House with a view to carry out this arrangement at once. The right hon. Gentleman had now told the Committee that he had had some communication with his Colleagues and the Prime Minister with reference to this matter; but he would point out that this was a very different thing from opening negotiations to carry out the arrangement at once—namely, that the officials in the House of Lords should be put on the same footing as those in the House of Commons. Under the circumstances, he thought the Committee must call for something more definite from the right hon. Gentleman. The matter was an important one, and ought not to be put off. In his opinion, some pressure should be used, and that it should be shown that the wish of the House of Commons in this affair was paramount. He would, therefore, urgently ask the Secretary to the Treasury to allow this Vote to be withdrawn for the present, as there was no urgency in the matter, in order that a Joint Committee of the two Houses might be immediately appointed to consider the whole question. If necessary, Votes on Account could, of course, be taken; but they ought not to allow this very important matter to drag on. It was, therefore, important that the Joint Committee should be appointed to go into the matter.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) is asking rather more than the circumstances of the case demand. The discussion to which he refers, took place in the month of July last year, when, under the circumstances in which we were placed, it was almost impossible to get together an adequate Committee charged with these duties in the House

of Lords. At the earliest time this year, however, the Committee met to consider the question, and is now pursuing its inquiries. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the revision of salaries which might be proposed could not, in justice, be made to apply to the present year. What we wished at the time was, that as vacancies occurred, no office should be filled without due consideration, with regard to the engagement made. Well, Sir, that has been done. The principle has been acted on in the case of the office of Taxing Master to the House of Lords which has been vacated. The late holder of the Office received £1,000 a-year, and the Office has been filled by the appointment of a person to perform the duties at £250 a-year and two clerks at £150 a-year each, the gross payment being now £550 in lieu of £1,000 formerly paid. It is perfectly true that there is an increase in the Vote, of this amount, as the Taxing Master's fees did not appear at all, but as the fees will now be paid into the Exchequer, there will be a saving of £450 a-year with reference to this Office. I only mention this by way of evidence, that the Treasury and the Government are anxious to carry out the engagement made, that it is being carried out, and that the inquiry is of a searching character. It was not suggested last year that the inquiry should be conducted by a Joint Committee, and I think it only reasonable to leave it to the House of Lords to make its own proposals with regard to any reduction of the establishment that may be considered desirable. But I have undertaken now to consider whether a Joint Committee of the two Houses can sit with advantage. I am inclined to regard the proposal with great favour, because it is most desirable that there should be agreement between the two Houses as to the cost of their establishments. The present inquiry has already proceeded to some extent; but I should certainly be disposed to press upon my Colleagues in the House of Lords, the desirability of the appointment of a Joint Committee. I trust I have said enough to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman opposite that Her Majesty's Government have done as much as they could reasonably be expected to do in the time which has elapsed to fulfil their engagement. We have already effected an economy in re-

ceived £2,500, and the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords received the same salary, yet 20 minutes or half-an-hour was the average length of a sitting of the House of Lords, taking one sitting with another throughout the year. The Counsel to the Chairman of Committees received £1,500 per annum; the Examiner of Standing Orders £900; the Clerk of the Parliament £2,500, in addition to £500 as an allowance for a house; the Clerk Assistant £1,800; the Reading Clerk £1,200; the Chief Clerk of the Parliament Office £1,200; the Senior Clerk £1,000; the other Senior Clerks £1,000 each. He presumed that some of these gentlemen belonged to that mysterious body of gentlemen whose work it was to say "*La Reine le veut*" when the Royal Assent was given to Bills. Among other ornamental officials was Black Rod, an officer who received £2,000 a-year and also received emoluments as Admiral on the Retired List, in addition to fees which he received for his own use as an officer of the Garter. He thought this gentleman must be a happy man to have so many official salaries to draw at the expense of the taxpayers of the country; while his only duty was to take part in the piece of periodical tomfoolery of knocking at the door of the House of Commons and summoning the Speaker to attend the House of Lords, and to give Members of the House of Commons leave to take ladies and gentlemen into the other House. Then there was the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod, who received £1,000, and the principal Door-keeper, who received £600 for discharging duties which any ordinary porter could be found to perform for 25s. a-week. Then there was a further array of Assistant Messengers and Porters who received £2,225 between them, and there was a Librarian who received £810. The duties of this gentleman must be very light; because no (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was satisfied that not one Peer in a dozen ever read a book in the Library of the House of Lords or elsewhere. This gentleman, however, had the aid of an Assistant Librarian with the salary of £439. He would not pursue the subject further than to say that the Estimates of the House of Lords were a perfect scandal, and he was not at all surprised that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

Randolph Churchill) had risen to protest against them. As he would not be in Order in moving the postponement of this Vote, he should propose its reduction by the sum of £1,000, part of the salary of the Chairman of Committees.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, £5,000,—Department of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Lords,—be reduced by the sum of £1,000."—*(Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)*

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he did not think the First Lord of the Treasury had a clear recollection of what passed last year on this Vote. The salaries of the officers of the House of Lords were then discussed at length on a Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). In the course of that discussion he (Mr. Childers) had called the attention of the House to the discrepancy between the salaries of the officials of the two Houses.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Motion before the Committee was for the reduction of the Vote in respect of a single item, and that this should be disposed of before the subject referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was dealt with.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was quite willing to withdraw his Motion in order to allow the right hon. Gentleman to proceed.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

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